

Ralph J. Bunch Legacy: Minority Officers

AMBASSADOR JOHN HOWARD MORROW

Interviewed by: Celestine Tutt

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Q: This is an oral history interview with Dr. John Howard Morrow, Professor Emeritus, Rutgers University. Dr. Morrow is a former United States Ambassador to the Republic of Guinea. In fact, he was the first ambassador to Guinea, having served in that capacity from 1959 to 1961. He has written much of those experiences in a work entitled, *First American Ambassador to Guinea*, published by Rutgers University in 1968. This interview is being sponsored by the Phelps-Stokes Fund as part of an oral history project on Black Chiefs of Mission. The interview is the first in a series. It is being held Monday, May 11, 1981 in New York City. Celestine Tutt, interviewer.

Dr. Morrow, could we begin by your telling us about the events which led to your entry into the diplomatic service and of telling us about Guinea and how it gained independence?

MORROW: Thank you very much, Madame Tutt. It will be a pleasure. First, let me observe that the impact and emergence of many African nations on the international scene caused people throughout the world to take a second look at the huge African continent which itself is shaped like a question mark. The challenge of those who would understand Africa rests in its unpredictability. The element of political unrest, uncertainty and surprise make it impossible to look into a crystal ball and predict how it will all come out. Many African leaders, thrust for the first time into positions of power and influence, have been puzzled at times by what they considered to be complacency on the part of the West. People from western countries have labeled Africans as truculent because they have demanded insistently their rights and just and fair treatment in all areas.



Now the severance of ties between the former West African - French West African territory - Guinea and Metropolitan France in September 1958, not only gave Guinea its independence but led to a cold war confrontation between East and the West in the newly created Republic of Guinea. Irked by the bold, dramatic step urged upon the Guinean people by Sekou Toure, charismatic Guinean labor leader, President Charles de Gaulle of France withdrew from Guinea all French teachers, technicians, and civil servants as well as all economic assistance. Eastern European Communist bloc countries swiftly moved in with offers of barter trade agreements and worked unstintingly to make Guinea not only a show place, but also a strategic bridgehead for further operation in Africa. The nations of the West, and particularly the United States, delayed recognition of the Guinean Government. Even after the recognition, the Western powers waited before offering economic and technical assistance so desperately needed by the struggling African Republic. The United States did not recognize Guinea until November 1958, and then waited until February 1959 before sending in a chargé d'affaires, accompanied by a young, newly inducted Foreign Service officer, the United States ambassador to Guinea until July 1959. Now I think this is a logical point as any to answer the question: How did I become involved in diplomacy and end up as a United States ambassador to, of all places, the Republic of Guinea?

Strangely enough, I can only conjecture about this. How would you feel if all out of the clear you were to receive a phone call from Washington asking you to come to the Department of State to meet with officials about a matter that is not disclosed? That's what happened to me in April 1959, in Durham, North Carolina, where at that time I was professor of French and chairman of the Department of Foreign Languages at North Carolina College. The only conclusion I could draw at that time was that the United States Information Service wanted to offer me a post as a cultural affairs officer in some French-speaking country.

What would have been your reaction if, during a conference in Washington with Ambassador Loy Henderson, then in charge of administration at the Department of State, and with Joseph Satterthwaite, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, the lead-off observation was: "Dr. Morrow, we probably know more about you than you know about yourself. We have read everything you have written, and we know about your contacts with African leaders and students, as well as with French officials when you were in France last summer, 1958." I thought, "What a bunch of prime 'so and so's'!" Yes, I had been held up in Paris in the summer of 1958 and had been kept out of Algeria and French West Africa, which were still under French rule because of a revolt among the French paratroopers in Algeria. It happened that the French Army threatened revolt when it appeared that de Gaulle, then recalled to power, might grant independence to Algeria.



Yes, I had talked with individuals, the individuals mentioned, plus Algerian students and French citizens. I was collecting data for a book on the French political situation in Africa, and since the French Government kept me out of Africa, these talks were admittedly a very poor substitute. But what the hell business was it of the United States Government what I did abroad as a private citizen? It was at this point in the 1959 conference that it would reveal to me that the State Department was very much interested in trying to get me to go to the newly formed Republic of Guinea as a first American Ambassador. Guinea? Who knew much about Guinea? A little bump on the hump of West Africa, an Atlantic coastal state where it rained in some parts for six months and is dry for six months. A country about the size of the state of Oregon bordered on the northeast by the Republic of Mali and on the southeast by the Ivory Coast, bordered on the northwest by what used to be Portuguese Guinea, now Guinea Bissau, and the Republic of Senegal, bordered on the south by Sierra Leone and Liberia; a country some of the citizens of which were among the friendliest in all of Africa; a country in which young people were keenly interested in receiving an education.

He was a dynamic labor leader, Sekou Toure, president of Guinea since 1958, who got his followers to vote "no" in the referendum sponsored by France in the summer of 1958. Guinea thus achieved its independence, but in retaliation, as previously stated, General de Gaulle withdrew all economic aid - French teachers, government functionaries and technicians. Officers were stripped of all valuable equipment and in Eastern bloc Communist nations, to fill the vacuum created by the departure of the French, Russia, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany established barter trade agreements to exchange consumer goods, machinery, all sorts of things for Guinean bananas, pineapples, peanuts, palm oil and so forth. What did the Western powers do in this crisis, one may ask? They stood along the side lines and delayed recognition of this new Republic out of deference, so the Guineans insisted, to France, a then NATO ally.

The United Kingdom was the first Western power to recognize Guinea in October 1958; the Federal Republic of Germany followed suit shortly thereafter. The United States recognized Guinea, November 1958, but waited, as we have indicated, until February 1959 before sending in the chargé d'affaires and that young, newly inducted Foreign officer to open an embassy in the Republic already piqued because of the delay in official recognition. I wasn't sent over until July 1959.

Now in retrospect, it is difficult to understand how the United States, the United Kingdom, the Federal Republic of Germany, and France could have been caught by surprise by the vote passed by the people of Guinea in that September constitutional referendum. For in the August 1958 confrontation between General de Gaulle and Sekou Toure, which had taken place in Conakry during de Gaulle's African trip in support of an affirmative referendum vote, Toure had made it clear to de Gaulle that Guineans would prefer poverty in liberty to riches in slavery.



It was generally known that de Gaulle had left Guinea thoroughly dissatisfied with the tone and implication of Toure's remarks. And then in September, just eight days before the referendum, Toure had asserted publicly that Guinea would be independent after September 29th. Nevertheless, the powers of the West reacted almost with startled disbelief that any former French African territory would take such a bold, costly and fateful step as to refuse to join the French community. What is even more incredible is the painful slowness with which the Western nations moved once the fact concerning the Guinean action became known. The Guineans, irked by these delays, accused the West of holding back out of deference to France, a NATO ally. It is true, also, however, that the Western powers, and in particular the United States, were simply not prepared for the dramatic action taken by the Guinean people under Sekou Toure.

On the other hand, the Guinean Ambassador to the United States, His Excellency Telli Diallo, had already been accredited to the United States Government in Washington for four months and the Government of Guinea had become more and more sensitive over the failure on the part of the United States to send a representative with the rank of ambassador. The U.S. posture in Africa at that moment was depicted ever so clearly in a report prepared under the capable guidance of the late Dr. Melville Herskovitz of Northwestern University. "The United States had never had a positive, dynamic policy in Africa," said this report. "Until very recently we have looked to continuing control by our friendly European powers as a guarantee of stability and dependable cooperation and have been reluctant to acknowledge the principle of self-government as fully applicable to its people."

This I must admit was very definitely true prior to the Kennedy Administration, and there are some who believe that this fast became true once again in 1967 and 1968. Russia, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Poland, East Germany were not plagued in 1958 with any concern about what France might think about their establishing relations with Guinea. Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia, as well as the Soviet Union, opened embassies in Conakry. East Germany set up a resident trade mission. The barter agreements offered by these Communist countries were readily accepted by the inexperienced and beleaguered Government of Guinea, that found itself pressed to the wall by the unexpectedly severe action taken by the de Gaulle government and by the initial unwillingness on the part of Western powers to ensure economic and technical assistance. And when the bloc countries moved to fill the vacuum created by the withdrawal of the French and the abrupt cessation of French economic assistance, they were not making a leap into the void; they fully expected to reap the benefits from their prompt action and ensure friendship and solidarity. There was no question that they intended to make Guinea their show place.



In addition to a barter trade agreement, for example, Czechoslovakia made available a supposedly unsolicited gift of small arms, light artillery and armored cars. The international press reported that two ships, loaded with Czechoslovakian arms and equipment, delivered their cargo to Guinea on March 24 and 27, respectively, in 1959, and along with the several thousand small arms, the light artillery, and armored cars aboard the first vessel, there were eighteen Czechoslovakian military advisors headed by a general. The second ship, of Polish registry, brought additional Czechoslovakian arms and equipment. A third ship, a Polish freighter, reached Guinea on April 17 with military and farm equipment from Czechoslovakia. Just four months after the shipment of arms, the Soviet Union offered the Republic of Guinea a thirty-five million dollar line of credit. East Germany agreed to set up a supervised running of a huge printing press in Conakry.

The reports concerning the shipment of Czechoslovakian arms to Guinea aroused concern, particularly among the Western powers. They were becoming more and more perturbed by what appeared to be the deep bloc penetration of the struggling African Republic.

However, Guinean Ambassador Telli Diallo, a lawyer by training, charged at the United Nations that colonial powers had sought to use Guinea's acceptance of a gift of Czech arms to discredit the Guinean Government as anti-West. Then President Sekou Toure chose this moment to reveal that he had appealed to President Dwight Eisenhower for one or two thousand rifles before accepting the arms gift from Czechoslovakia. Toure stated that the Guinean arms requested had been made through President William V. S. Tubman of Liberia in November 1958, before diplomatic relations had been established with the United States. Toure declared that he had not received any answer to his request. But the United States Department of State reported on April 30, 1959 that the government of Guinea had not replied to suggestions concerning direct talks on the matter.

Nevertheless, during his official state visit to the United States in October 1959, President Toure stated emphatically, and no Washington official denied it, that he had never received any answer to his request for arms. He asserted further that the United States was the only country from which Guinea had attempted to secure arms, and he regretted that this nation had found it impossible to help his government in a moment of real crisis in the development of the Republic of Guinea.



The dramatic, solitary stand taken by Sekou Toure and his political party vis-a-vis France, struck a sympathetic cord in the hearts of Africans throughout Africa. On that September day of the referendum, eighty-five percent of the eligible voters in Guinea had gone to the polls. Ninety-six percent of these eligible voters had voted "NO" and had thus ignored General de Gaulle's appeal to come into the community. This move by Guinea to secure immediate independence gave pause to many African leaders, who repeatedly in the past had uttered high-sounding phrases concerning the necessity for independence. These leaders, though talking and, in some instances, wishing for independence, did not believe it to be wise to reject the French economic assistance which they knew to be essential for raising their living standards. Unlike Sekou Toure, these African makers of policy were unwilling to break with France at that time. They harbored the belief that France was as interested in maintaining rapport with the African republics as these republics were interested in receiving economic and technical assistance.

Toure was viewed with admiration, respect and even awe by the young people in North Africa, as well as in sub-Saharan Africa, for he seemed to represent the epitome of bold and fearless action in the face of overwhelming odds. And even those individuals who questioned the wisdom of Toure's course of action, and believed sincerely that it could only fail, grudgingly admitted that this young African leader was not lacking in grit.

The attention of nations both large and small became focused upon this leader of the small West African Republic, and their officials discovered in their probe how Toure had succeeded in getting his people to take a step which no other French African leader had succeeded in getting his followers to take. These officials discovered that Sekou Toure, a self-made man, was an extremely intelligent leader, as well as an astute politician. Toure possessed charm, dignity and poise, and fully aware of his limitations and educational training, he surrounded himself with the few Guineans that had been trained in law, pharmacy, medicine and administration. And through the years, the Guinean populace had become accustomed to seeing Sekou Toure in positions of responsibility and leadership; he had been Secretary General of the Postal and Telecommunication Personnel Union, 1945; he was one of the founders and the vice presidents of the important African political party, the Rassemblement Dēmocratique Africain, in 1946. He became Secretary General of the Guinean branch of this political party, which was called Le Parti Dēmocratique de Guinée, in 1952; and then went on to become Mayor of Conakry in 1955, and Guinean deputy to the French National Assembly in 1956. He was elected head of the African trade union that eventually claimed 700,000 members throughout sub-Saharan Africa: Union Générale des Travailleurs de Afrique Noire. And in May of 1957, he became a member of the Grand Council of France, West Africa.



Prior to the September referendum, Sekou Toure already had at his disposal a well organized and smoothly functioning political party that had silenced virtually all opposition in Guinea. He had had the sagacity to appeal to the women of Guinea and to urge them to exercise their franchise. Toure openly insisted that women should play a more important role, not only in Guinean affairs, but also in the affairs of Africa. He supported the cause of monogamy in a Moslem country. He pointed out the inadequate health services and urged that there should be more building of dispensaries. He championed the cause of improved education and urged the construction of additional schools. He opposed tribal differences and a maintenance of village chiefs or headsmen. He considered the chiefs the main bastion of the indigenous feudal system. He therefore convinced the people of Guinea that they should elect their own leaders and do away with the old practice of chieftaincy. And by June of 1958, Toure's party had scored sweeping victories in local elections and had achieved real success in decentralizing the administration of Guinea.

This same machinery that had worked so well in giving Toure's party the ascendancy in Guinea, despite resistance from the French administrators, was used to get out the vote for the referendum. On the eve of the referendum, songs composed in the dialects of Sousou, Malinke, Fula (Foulah), Kissi were sung throughout Guinea, praising the exploits of Guinean heroes and lauding in particular the courage of Sekou Toure, who was struggling to put the French out of Guinea once and for all. Toure was compared to an elephant - syli - an animal of great strength and one most difficult to handle when aroused. He was compared also with Samori Toure, a fearless Guinean leader who had fought against French occupation in the latter part of the nineteenth century. These songs were heard constantly over the radio and were on the lips of even the smallest child out in the brush. No American television or radio saturation for political candidates was any more effective than this campaign in Guinea, where 90% of the people were illiterate. Thus it was that this all-out campaign developed into an ebb tide that swept through the ballot boxes of Guinea and changed this West African nation from a status of a territory into that of an independent nation.

Q: Dr. Morrow, thank you. Given the United States' hesitation or the delay in recognizing Guinea, how were you personally received in that country?

MORROW: Rightfully you should wonder how was I received in this country, caught up in its newly won independence. I admit, frankly, that upon our arrival at the airport in July 1959, the red carpet was certainly rolled out. On hand were the Guinean army band, a detachment of troops, a color guard, numerous Guinean officials and diplomatic representatives from Western countries. We rode in an open car behind a motorcycle escort made up of ten smartly clad Guinean policemen riding new Czechoslovakian motorcycles. And all along the eight-mile route leading into the capital city, Conakry, Guineans rushed to the roadside to applaud and to shout warm words of welcome: "Soyez le bienvenue, monsieur l'ambassadeur des Etats Unis." I shall never forget that warm welcome.



One couldn't be in Guinea very long, however, without discovering the malaise that existed beneath the surface. Despite the warmth of this welcome on the part of the people, I detected a decided anti-Western government sentiment among Guinean government members. This sentiment was not directed toward me personally. The Guineans had extreme doubts that the Western powers, and particularly the United States, really intended to help their country, not to speak of the rest of black Africa, progress economically, politically and culturally.

It is true also that the French who remained in Guinea, despite de Gaulle's orders to withdraw, were very anti-American. Unlike the Guineans, they feared an American take-over. And let's not forget the rumors concerning my second-class citizenship and the whispers about the U.S. effrontery in sending a black dupe of American capitalism to deceive naive Guineans. These rumors originated in America and were helped along by the French, Russian and Eastern European representatives.

It cannot be denied that a June 2, 1959 editorial that appeared in the Washington Post prior to my departure from America had talked about the element of condescension in sending a Negro ambassador to an African republic. The editorial concluded with the observation that the deep Communist bloc penetration called for an experienced and skillful career diplomat. To the credit of the Guinean Government, this matter was disposed of by revealing that all racism was ruled out even in its constitution. The Guinean Government declared that it had no interest in a person's color but only in an individual's merit and willingness to respect Guinean sovereignty. In a final analysis, Guinea had requested the State Department to send an educator and not a career diplomat, for it was felt that an educator would have greater sympathy for and understanding of the problems and aspirations of a developing country.

I admit very frankly that my role in Guinea was not that of a cookie-pusher or glorified paper shopper. The bloc countries were working overtime to make this new African republic their show place. It was not just a question of competing with Communist and other Western diplomats to win the confidence of the Guinean Government. I found it just as difficult to convince Washington officials that President Sekou Toure was a genuine African nationalist struggling to preserve Guinean independence as it was at first to convince Guinean officials that the United States did want to help developing nations preserve their sovereignty.

It was the additional challenge of winning the respect, confidence, yes, and loyalty of the white Americans on the American Embassy staff in Guinea, some of whom were still influenced and guided by the stereotypes of their youth concerning the question of race. To make the odds even more interesting, I didn't have at my disposal, as did the Russian Ambassador, a thirty-five million dollar line of credit with Guinea. Nor did I have a twenty-five million dollar interest-free loan as did the Chinese Communist Ambassador. I could not lay claim to supplying small arms at a time of need, as could the Czechoslovakian Ambassador.



However, a rapid assessment of my tour of duty in Guinea would reveal, among other things, that forty-two Guinean students came to America to study, the first of some one hundred and fifty selected for studying in colleges and universities in America. Operation Crossroads, a privately sponsored summer work program involving American college students, the forerunner of the Peace Corps, was admitted to Guinea. Eighteen American teachers worked directly for the Guinean Government; thirteen Americans participated in an English-teaching project under the joint supervision of the International Cooperation Administration and the United States Information Service; an American cultural center was opened in Conakry and remained open during my tour of duty; nine Guinean Government officials, in addition to the six who had accompanied President Toure and his wife on the first official state visit to the United States in October 1959, visited America. An economic and technical bilateral agreement was signed on behalf of Guinea and America by the Ministry of Plan and myself, in Conakry, on September 30, 1960. United States planes, in August 1960, flying under the flag of the United Nations, transported Guinean soldiers to the Congo to join the United Nations force in the Democratic Republic of the Congo during the uprising there. Ships from the United States South Atlantic Fleet twice made goodwill visits to Conakry, December of 1960, February 1961, and were welcomed by the Guinean Government. My family and I had been warmly received not only in the cities but also the villages of Guinea.

Now these accomplishments seem very meager today, but please remember that they were achieved despite the barter trade agreement, despite the presence in the Guinean capital of diplomatic representatives from most of the Communist bloc countries including North Vietnam and Outer Mongolia, and despite the fact that the United States had yet to implement the economic and bilateral agreement signed in September 1960. During the period that had followed Guinean independence, the Communist bloc countries and the Western powers failed repeatedly to take seriously Guinea's foreign policy, which was based upon positive neutrality. The Communist countries regarded the Guinean policy as a facade that covered up favorable leanings toward the East. The Western powers interpreted the Guinean policy as meaning neutrality in favor of the East.

In retrospect, the Guinean flirtation with the Communist bloc countries carried it almost to the brink. That it did not become a bloc satellite may be attributed partly to Toure's expertise and brinkmanship, partly to mistakes by bloc representatives. If the Russians had not had such disdain for Guinean intelligence, they might have had Guinea with its seaport and airport as a base of operation for further African conquest. But the Russians became impatient and imperious and tried to drive too hard a bargain too quickly. They and their bloc colleagues failed to hire a single Guinean either in their chancelleries or residences. The Guineans took this for distrust. Furthermore, employment was badly needed. The materiel supplied by the Communist countries did not come up to expectation. The abandoned jeeps, trucks, buses, discarded for lack of spare parts, provided stark testimony of the weakness of certain aspects of barter trade agreements.



The abrupt and enforced departure of the Soviet Ambassador from Guinea, seven months after my arrival in Paris, on a new assignment in 1961, brought to an unceremonious close, for the moment, the honeymoon between Guinea and the Soviet Union. An aborted revolt in this African republic had revealed the extent of Soviet activities among Guinean youth organizations. President Toure's insistence on the recall of the Soviet Ambassador caused both the West and the East to take a new look at Toure's oft-repeated policy of positive neutrality.

It concerned me greatly at one point to learn, during an alleged American and Russian intervention in Angola, for example, that Russian vessels were reported to be departing from Guinea carrying Cuban missionaries to Angola. In the first place, this seemed to indicate that relations had been patched up between Russia and Guinea. Furthermore, it recalled my efforts, repeated efforts in fact, to convince Washington officials between 1959 and 1961 that Russia would one day take advantage of Guinea's airfield and seaport.

There's another matter that troubles me because it reveals how clearly disguised censorship can prevent the truth from being disclosed. In the February 23, 1974 edition of the *Saturday Review World*, there appeared an article by Russell Warren Howe entitled, *Black But Not African*. One paragraph in Howe's article contained at least three untrue statements about the situation in Guinea between 1959 and 1961. Although I sent a rebuttal to Norman Cousins, the editor of *Saturday Review*, my reply to Howe's article was never printed. Here's the paragraph in question.

"Ten years earlier when President Eisenhower sent Professor Morrow, a black, to be America's first American Ambassador to Guinea, President Toure refused to deal with Morrow. He saw in Morrow's appointment an insult concocted to appease de Gaulle, who had opposed Guinean independence. And when a black USIS Officer was appointed, Toure closed the USIS library. But when Morrow was replaced by a white journalist, William Attwood, Toure swamped him with hospitality."

Strangely enough, Howe, who characterized himself as a longtime observer in African affairs, never came to Guinea while I was there and thus was not in a position to make a first-hand or honest assessment of the Guinean situation. On the other hand, noted *New York Times* journalists such as Homer Bigget, Pulitzer-Prize winner Henry Tanner, the late Tom Brady, men known for intelligence, objectivity, and veracity, did make it a point to get into Guinea to learn of the complexity of the Guinean scene. It is not true that President Toure refused to deal with me; that my appointment termed by Howe an insult was contrived to appease de Gaulle; that the appointment of a black USIS Officer caused the closing of the USIS library.



Had Toure refused to accept my assignment, I could never have set foot in his country. Had my presence in Guinea later become a source of annoyance to Toure or his government, I would have been put out of Guinea as a persona non grata just as the Russian Ambassador was put out in 1961. How ridiculous to assert that my appointment was concocted to appease de Gaulle. De Gaulle detested Toure, the person who had insulted him publicly during his official visit to Guinea in 1958 by calling for Guinean independence from France. De Gaulle was certainly not appeased by the appointment of a black American acceptable to President Toure. It's a matter of record that the USIS library was never closed once it had been officially opened during my tour of duty. The Guinean Government officials were suspicious of the purpose of the USIS because the word "information" connotes the gathering of intelligence. My job was to convince these officials that the United States Information Service was not a branch of the CIA. And, incidentally, the head of the USIS staff in Conakry was white, as was his assistant. Only later was the staff augmented by a black American male and an African woman from Sierra Leone. A racially-integrated team was attached on a temporary basis to teach English. And this group was replaced by a permanent black American English teacher.

I will be the first to admit that any American policy geared to send black diplomats exclusively to Africa would not only be discriminatory and denigrating, it would be disastrous both for America and the African nations involved. A black skin carried no assurance either of automatic acceptance or success on the African scene. It follows also that a white skin is not necessarily the passport to diplomatic victory in Africa. The truth is that if the individual lacks sensitivity, judgment, patience, common sense, human compassion and an excellent knowledge of the official language, the culture and civilization, color will be of absolutely no help. There are black and white persons in the diplomatic service as well as on the outside who are eminently qualified to serve the United States anywhere in the world. But enough of this.

I firmly believe that if the French had been more tactful, had shown more common sense and less pique in handling the severance of relations with Guinea, the situation might have been quite different. The French language was undoubtedly a unifying factor in a country with so many African dialects. The French had been most skillful in spreading a culture, civilization and language. But de Gaulle, angered at Guinea's failure to become a part of the new French community, did all that he could to make the Guinean experiment fail. It was indeed frustrating for me to witness the care taken by Washington officials not to offend de Gaulle by American activities in Guinea. But when I think of the shaky relationship that came to exist between France and America, there's little need for me to express my disdain for the vain efforts to appease the French leader between 1959 and 1961. It seems to me that United States policy toward a nation such as Guinea should not be determined by our efforts to obtain the good grace of such nations or our desires not to offend NATO allies, but by our adherence to a coherent and dynamic policy developed along the line of United States responsibilities and interests as a world power toward developing nations.



I am not advocating the deliberate ignoring of the views of our allies, but I submit that we must be prepared to ignore these views when they conflict with our inherent obligations toward developing nations. We cannot blow hot and cold in Africa and still expect for our policy to have credibility in that continent. And we must stop paying lip service to self-determination for nations and in the development of states that are politically independent and economically viable. We must stop giving African nations the impression that our interest in them is determined solely by cold war consideration. We must avoid the appearance of ignoring those nations which are consistently friendly and rewarding those that flaunt things for which we stand. We must convince African nations that our African policy is a coherent one and not something made up from day to day, as we move from one crisis to another.

These things we can learn from diplomacy, African style. And the presence of Africans in the United Nations and the United States in ever increasing numbers - students and diplomats, business and trainees and visitors and so forth - is most important in improving the lines of communication and in exploding myths about Africa and the United States. And though the general American public may still remain ill-informed about the real significance of Africa on the international scene, it is true also that there are thousands of Americans today who are knowledgeable about Africa and Africans, and this body of informed and interested people must exert every effort to convince our government that it has a part to play in helping these nations preserve their sovereignty and viability. Africans returning to their homeland must strive to convey to their compatriots the sincere interest and concern of Americans who truly want African states to attain their rightful place on the international scene.

Q: Dr. Morrow, your book, *First American Ambassador to Guinea*, published by Rutgers University Press in 1968, gives a very detailed picture of your tour of duty in Guinea. I wonder if you would please tell us about some of the significant events that you talk about in this book.

MORROW: All right, thank you very much.

First, let's say life was never dull in Guinea, whether I was engaged in averting a break in diplomatic relations or supervising the airlift of Guinean soldiers on U.S. planes down to the Congo, or representing the United States at independence celebrations at newly emerging African nations.



For example, one evening my neighbor, Ambassador Herbert Schroeder, called on me at the official residence prior to his return to Bonn where he had been summoned by his government. It was in early March of 1960 and the report was spreading throughout world capitals that the Republic of Guinea had become the first African nation to recognize the German Democratic Republic, which was East Germany. This report was supposedly based on pictures that had been made in East Germany reportedly showing the Guinean Ambassador to Moscow presenting his credentials to the East German President. The Government of the Federal Republic of Germany - West Germany - had been adhering to the Holstein Doctrine according to which it would sever diplomatic relations with any nation that recognized the government of Communist East Germany. The calling home of Ambassador Schroeder on the heels of the news linking Guinea and East Germany seemed to be the first step in a break between West Germany and Guinea.

Despite the fact that no aid agreement existed between the United States and Guinea in March of 1960, it was generally accepted among the Western and Eastern members of the diplomatic corps in Guinea that I had successfully established strong personal rapport with President Toure and the members of his government. It was therefore not unusual for Ambassador Schroeder to seek my views in a moment of crisis. In addition, Ambassador Schroeder and I had established very friendly relations and often took our daily swim in the ocean to talk over mutual problems. I told the Ambassador that nobody could advise him on a course of action and that he undoubtedly would not only have to make his decision by the time of his arrival in Bonn. However, if I were in his place, I would, before leaving Conakry, send a message to my government recommending that it investigate the incident carefully before taking any action as drastic as severing diplomatic relations with Guinea.

I pointed out to the Ambassador that his country was the only Western power doing anything tangible toward making Guinea viable and it would be a tremendous blow to have this assistance cut off. I reminded him that the Guinean Government had resisted the efforts of the East German Trade Mission in Conakry to establish an embassy and I thought it significant that this report of the establishment of diplomatic ties between Guinea and East Germany had come at a time when President Toure was away from Conakry visiting his constituents in the brush. I assured the West German Ambassador that I would call unofficially on the Guinean Government to urge that every possible step be made to clear up this misunderstanding. Until I was presented with specific proof that Guinea had taken the action claimed by the West Germans, I intended to act as if the report were not true. We agreed, of course, that if Guinea actually had recognized East Germany, nothing could avert a break between his country and Guinea.



To keep my promise to Ambassador Schroeder, I called the next day on the Acting President, Abdourahmane Diallo, Minister of State, who happened also to be one of my neighbors in Donka. Diallo, never without his pipe, received me at the Présidence and we immediately got to the matter at hand. I told him that I was there unofficially as a friend of the "court" and I wished to stress the seriousness of the situation confronting Guinea in its relationship with the Federal Republic of Germany. I said that it would probably be the responsibility of the Guinean Government to take the initiative to establish beyond the shadow of a doubt what a diplomatic representative was doing in East Germany, if he had been there at all. Guinea must do this if it wished the community of nations to continue to believe its professed policy of positive neutralism and its affirmed belief in self-determination.

Acting President Diallo thanked me for my interest and said that, to the best of his knowledge, the Republic of Guinea had not recognized the East German Government. He admitted that the East German representative of the Trade Mission in Conakry had made repeated efforts to get the Mission raised to the status of an embassy, but the Guinean Government had refused. The Acting President said that he did not have the full details of the Guinean Ambassador's visit to East Germany, but he felt that it had nothing to do with the establishment of diplomatic relations. He assured me that word would be sent to President Toure to return to Conakry and that the matter would be taken up with the President the moment he returned.

I expected that there would be an increasing sentiment among certain government agencies of Washington to press for a break in diplomatic relations between the United States and Guinea in order to present a united front with West Germany and to chastise Guinea for its failure to adhere to a policy of "positive neutralism". I felt that such an action on the part of the United States would strike a fatal blow to American influence in Africa. West Germany itself had not formally broken ties with Guinea; it had merely called home its ambassador for consultation. If the matter were settled in a satisfactory fashion between West Germany and Guinea, the United States, once it had broken, would find itself in an untenable position. Only as a last resort should a major world power break relations with a struggling developing nation that has yet to acquire skill and sophistication in things diplomatic.

I planned and launched a campaign to combat any attempt to initiate a break between Guinea and the United States. After a week went by and the Federal Republic of Germany had yet to report that it was going to break with Guinea, I began to feel slightly more at ease. President Toure returned to the capital, finally yielding to the insistence of the West German Government, and answered several specific questions concerning relations between the Republic of Guinea and the East German Communist regime. President Toure authorized his Minister of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to inform me that his answers to these questions were to be hand-carried to Paris, where they would be delivered to the West German Government by the Guinean Ambassador to France - Naby Youlah.



In the final stage of negotiations between Guinea and West Germany, West German officials came to Guinea during the first week of April 1960 and traveled to Kankan in upper Guinea to have talks with President Toure who was presiding over the national conference of the Parti Dēmocratique de Guinée. And shortly after these discussions, it became known officially that East Germany was not opening an embassy in Conakry and that there was not going to be a break between West Germany and Guinea. Before Ambassador Telli Diallo returned to Guinea, his government had requested the State Department in Washington to convey to me its warm thanks for the very helpful role I had played during the period of crisis between Bonn and Conakry. Upon the return of Ambassador Schroeder to Guinea from West Germany, his first official act after his protocol visit to the Guinean Government and Ministry of Foreign Affairs was to come to my office in Conakry to express, in person, the thanks of his government for my good services. This is one of the few moments during my stay in Guinea when I felt that my efforts had not been in vain.

My first confrontation with the Guinean Government concerning an American citizen came during the first part of August 1959. This incident provided valuable insight into the inclination on the part of Guinean ministers to do business only with the head man of an embassy. They were influenced in this respect by their own experiences in running their ministries.

Miss Joan Gillespie, a young American woman, arrived in Conakry to write articles on Africa for the New York Times and several American periodicals. Miss Gillespie had received her Ph.D. from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy and served two years as a Foreign Service officer. She had written a book on the Algerian Liberation Movement. She had been drawn to Guinea by many conflicting reports on the Guinean experience in independence. Miss Gillespie called on me at the chancellery and let me know that she hoped to travel into the interior of Guinea to gather data for news articles. I told her that travel for civilians was still somewhat restricted and she would have to get permission from the Minister of the Interior, Fodeba Keita. The Embassy was ready to help, if possible, but the Guinean Government had been most unhappy over some of the articles about their country which had appeared in American periodicals and newspapers.

Two days after Miss Gillespie's visit to the chancellery, a call was received from the Ministry of Interior. Minister Keita wished to see me immediately. I sent word that the Minister could come right over. Another call came saying that the Minister would appreciate it if I would stop by and see him as he was expecting several important phone calls that morning. When I arrived, I found Minister Keita, who was usually quite relaxed and jovial, pacing back and forth in his office. He reported that an American journalist had attempted to file a story reflecting seriously on the Guinean national honor. He called me because he wanted me to ask this person to leave Guinea. I asked the Minister what the journalist had said in the story, and he replied that she had been writing about a matter that concerned only Guinea and another African nation.



The phone rang at that moment and a spirited conversation in Sousou dialect ensued, after which the Minister turned and, explained: "That woman journalist has just attempted to file a second story." He said a Ghanaian in difficulty with the Ghanaian authorities had been arrested at the airport in Conakry when he attempted to enter Guinea. The American reporter had witnessed the arrest, and when she discovered that the Ghanaian was still in jail twenty-four hours later, with no charges against him, she began to question police officials. Not receiving an answer satisfactory to her, she sent off a dispatch to New York about the seizure at the airport. And in her second wire she was questioning Guinean procedures for arrest and holding prisoners. She made comparisons between the Guinean police methods and those employed behind the Iron Curtain.

I explained to the Minister the American concept of freedom of speech and freedom of the press and said that his description of the journalist's activities suggested that she was performing the usual duties of her profession without in any way encroaching upon Guinean sovereignty. I told him that I could not ask a journalist to leave Guinea. In fact, one of my duties as Ambassador was to see to it that American citizens received full protection under the law of the land.

Miss Gillespie was not asked to leave Guinea either by the Guinean authorities or by me, but she was not given permission to go into the interior. After a week in Conakry, she left for North Africa and all of us were very greatly shocked when we learned some months later that, seven weeks after her arrival at Tunisia, she had died following a brief illness.

Q: Anything suspicious about the illness?

MORROW: No, I think it had something to do with her kidneys and her liver. That was a question which was raised immediately because I don't know whether it was at this time or not, but a chap by the name of Fî½lix Moumî½, who had been one of the so-called leaders in the Cameroons and reputedly was also involved in smuggling bombs and so on, was actually poisoned in Belgium by drinking a poisoned drink; so people were raising questions. But it was finally decided that actually she had died from natural causes. I got a very nice letter from her parents thanking me for having assisted her while she was in Guinea, which came also as quite a shock.



I want to say a word about what was called "le complot" or plot. A mere handful of those accused in May of 1960 of plotting to overthrow the Government of Guinea were former soldiers. Among the civilians condemned to death were a brilliant young Guinean lawyer, Ibrahima Diallo, and a religious leader, El-Hadj Mohammed, was from Conakry. In his May Day address President Toure revealed to the populace and diplomatic corps that a plot against his government had been discovered, and arms found at various points along the frontier between Guinea and Senegal. And the Ivory Coast also was included in this. Well, in a frenzied speech, Toure excoriated the saboteurs and asserted that the guilty would be caught and given the ultimate punishment.

Several days later, Toure summoned the diplomatic corps to the National Assembly Chamber and gave us a lengthy explanation of the crisis facing his government. He told us that the suspects would not be tried in the traditional courts of Guinea but would face a popular tribunal consisting of the members of the National Political Bureau; the deputies of the National Assembly; the members of the National Council of the Guinean Labor Union; the members of the National Council of Youth Organizations; and the Secretaries General of the three sectors of Conakry.

When I heard about the size of this popular tribunal and thought about the provocative nature of the radio broadcast and the public statements already uttered by Sekou Toure himself, I wondered just how much chance there was for a prisoner to receive a fair trial.

On May 4, 1960, we learned that a special committee appointed by an extraordinary party conference was to draw a dossier of the accused, and the accused were to be confronted by their accusers. On May 8th, the members of the popular tribunal met at 6:00 p.m. to hear the result of the special committee's investigation and reach a verdict.

Two days later the verdict was announced. It was not possible at any time between May 4th and May 8th to discover whether the prisoners were defended by lawyers or given the opportunity to appeal the verdict. All that the public knew was that eighteen people were condemned to death, seven in absentia, one of whom, a Frenchman, had escaped in a private plane. A French druggist was sentenced to twenty years of hard labor and he was released later on in 1961. A Swiss national received a sentence of fifteen years at hard labor. He also was released in 1961. Twenty-one Guineans were sentenced to five years at hard labor and all those who had been convicted had their property confiscated.



The diplomatic corps and the Guinean populace were very surprised to learn that Attorney Ibrahima Diallo and El-Hadj Mohammed Lamine Kaba had been accused of being agents working for a foreign power and sentenced to death. I did not know the religious leader, but I was acquainted with Diallo. I found it difficult to believe that he was in the employ of a foreign power. I did know that he was dissatisfied with the one-party system in Guinea and had openly discussed the possibility of organizing a second political party. He'd made no effort to cover his dissent and he even discussed it at the April 1960 meeting of the party at Kaulsan. Diallo was intelligent and alert. Had he been working for a foreign power, he would have been clever enough to keep this hidden from his colleague. And I was aware that the religious leader, El-Hadj, had expressed his dissatisfaction with the Guinean officials and had accused these officials of doing nothing for the masses but merely looking out for their selfish interests. The unfortunate part about this alleged coup is the fact that no outsiders were admitted to the trials or had had access to the supposed evidence. It was never possible to determine whether the accused had been properly represented by counsel or given the opportunity to appeal the verdict. No announcement was ever made as to when, where or how death penalties were carried out. Nothing was ever done to refute the charges that the accused had been subjected to inhuman torture to induce confessions. Even in Algeria the Ben Bella government saw fit to announce when and how it executed those who plotted against the state. Perhaps in Guinea that secrecy had been necessary in order to avoid a tribal outbreak. However, this very secrecy gave rise to grave misgivings about the guilt of the accused.

Q: Did anything happen to the families of those men?

MORROW: In the case of the families, Diallo was married to a white French woman and I think she was finally allowed to leave the country. I'm not aware of what happened in connection with the family of El-Hadj Kaba, but I do know that there were a number of disillusioned people in the diplomatic corps at the manner in which these people were, should we say, done in. And the feeling was that it had not been a fair trial and there was a question of the fact that somebody had openly dissented against the party and that this could not be countenanced at that time.

Q: Were there any other instances of that kind? Was that the first major incident?



MORROW: Well, the major incident, for example, the second attempted coup, which I think that I've already given indication, the major source of disturbance this time was among the youth and the teachers and at that point this is when it was felt that the Soviet Ambassador had been involved in getting too close to the youth group and so on, and he was asked to leave. And when I learned of the Soviet Ambassador's departure, I thought about the numerous times I had warned my Guinean counterpart and several of his colleagues certainly, and that President Toure and his government would remain strong enough to withstand Communist infiltration tactics and might well prove to be their undoing. Always they scoffed at the idea and called to my attention that the nearest Russian troops were thousands of miles away. Now, they implied that I was not thinking about troops so much as about what would happen to Guinea if their youth organization, women's groups, Democratic Party in Guinea, and various ministries were successfully infiltrated. This could mean that one day they would wake up and discover that they had to seek jobs elsewhere, but of course, this is actually what happened in the case of the revolt of the youth, and the Soviet Ambassador was put out. I never did find out what they did to the youths.

Before I'm through, however, I wish to give a footnote of what happened after I left Guinea in connection with some of the members and ministers who were literally done in. I shall produce a letter later that I would like to put in as a footnote.

Q: Please.

MORROW: I think a word about that operation airlift in the Congo would be appropriate at this point.

Q: Proceed.

MORROW: In the latter part of August 1960, I was informed that American planes flying under the flag of the United Nations were going to arrive in Guinea within the next twenty-four hours to begin the airlift of troops to the Congo. I did not feel that this information presented any immediate problem to our Embassy since the operation was to be under the supervision of the United Nations' mission in Conakry assigned to aid the Guinean Government, for example, to develop administrative cadres. Naturally, I personally would cooperate in every possible way, but this was the United Nations' operation. The United States and other powers had merely offered to help in the form of transportation, communications and supplies.



The United Nations' mission in Conakry received word that a U.S. Air Force officer in charge of the logistics of the airlift, was to arrive on a plane coming from the American air base in Châteauroux, France. Merely as a courtesy gesture, I was at hand at the airport to greet the officer when he arrived several hours later in a huge C-119 transport plane. Major Behrens had expected to load the plane immediately with soldiers and supplies, but discovered that the first contingent from the interior had not arrived in the airport. A hasty consultation had brought the decision to postpone the departure for the next day. The next morning Guinean troops were assembled in the center of Conakry near the political party headquarters. President Toure made a brief speech urging the troops to comport themselves as brave men and to fight to liberate their African brothers in the Congo. He then asked Major Behrens to stand at his side as the troops passed in review and marched to the buses and trucks waiting to carry them to the airport. The members of the Guinean Government then hurried to the airport to see the take-off.

The President and his Ministers were becoming somewhat impatient when the C-119 didn't take off immediately, but finally the soldiers assigned to take off with the first contingent were aboard. I had been standing near the C-119 watching the loading operation when suddenly I heard my name called. I turned around to see the Embassy political officer, John Cunningham, hurrying across the tarmac in the morning heat and Pat Cunningham - we called him Pat - was perspiring heavily by the time he reached me. I could see that he was very much troubled. In his hand were two telegrams, and when he handed them to me he said softly, "Mr. Ambassador, here are two more problems for your attention."

The telegrams had not been sent to me but were directed to Major Behrens and the captain of the C-119 and they had been sent in my care from Châteauroux through commercial channels, which meant that anybody in the downtown telegraph office in Conakry who could read English, already had had access to their content. The stark, succinct messages typed on those yellow slips of paper indicated that the airlift had been suspended and that the captain of the C-119 was ordered to return immediately to the airbase in Châteauroux.

Q: The airlift was cancelled?

MORROW: Yes. Cancelled! Cunningham, at this point seeing the airlift was cancelled, stood by in silence as I glanced hurriedly at the dismaying messages. Without a word to him I placed the telegrams quickly in my inside coat pocket, walked over to the Major and Captain and said, "Come on men, let's get this blooming plane out of here before Thanksgiving day finds us still trying to get to the Congo." My tone was quiet; I was not smiling. The Captain saluted smartly, thanked us for our hospitality, climbed into the plane and started the engines. He taxied the huge plane off the tarmac toward the airstrip as a military band struck up the Guinean national anthem.



The members of the Government were waving goodbye, and after a brief warm-up, the C-119 started down the runway with its very heavy load. As it approached the end of the runway, it still was not airborne. At that moment the terrible thought passed through my mind that possibly the runway was not long enough for a plane so heavily laden to get off the ground in the heat of the day. Seemingly with inches to spare, the plane with its precious cargo lifted off the ground, wavered for just a moment, and rose toward the noonday sun. As the plane disappeared in the distance, I turned to the Major and said, "Major, I've just done something which is probably going to cause all hell to break loose, but I want you to know that I stand ready to accept the sole responsibility for my act."

The Major was clearly surprised with what I had said, but he waited with quiet interest for what was to follow. "Did you see the two messages which FSO (foreign service officer) Cunningham delivered to me a short while ago? What I mean to say is, did you see him hand me two yellow slips of paper?"

"As a matter of fact I did, Mr. Ambassador, and I was wondering whether or not something important had come up about our air operation." "The truth is that something very important has come up which is going to complicate life for us here in Guinea for the next forty-eight hours or so."

I gave him the two telegrams which he proceeded to study carefully. It was not until after I saw a faint trace of a smile beginning to form on the Major's features that I began to feel a little more hopeful about the whole business.

"Major," I continued, "I had to withhold those messages from you and the Air Force captain, for once you had seen them, you would have had to comply. I'm sure that you can understand that I would rather have faced a firing squad than to have been forced to go up to the airport balcony and tell President Toure, the Defense Minister and their colleagues that the airlift was off. What explanation could I have offered?"

"You were confronted with a tough decision, Mr. Ambassador, and you undoubtedly made it on the basis of your knowledge of the situation here."

"Can you imagine yourself, Major, going into that plane to tell those soldiers to get off the plane, unload the supplies, ammunition and await orders to return to their encampment? How do you suppose they would have reacted, especially those who obviously are none too military? What would have been the reaction of that huge crowd of Guineans massed around the airport to see the triumphal departure of their first contingent of troops ever to leave the Republic of Guinea?"



After reiterating that I was accepting full responsibility for withholding the two official messages and stood ready to be recalled for so doing, I went on to explain that I had no alternative. It was my feeling that if the orders had been carried out as directed, the United Nations, as well as the United States, would have been in a position not only delicate but untenable. I said there had already been enough problems concerning Guinean troops going to the Congo without the United States taking any unilateral action that could be interpreted as blocking their passage. I requested the Major's assistance in demanding the reason why the airlift was being called off and in urging that the operation not be suspended but carried out in keeping with the U.S. pledge to the United Nations.

The Major consented to help. We sent messages to Washington, Châteauroux, France, and had the local UN mission send one to New York insisting on an explanation for the cancellation of the airlift, and stressing the necessity of keeping the promise to transport Guinean troops to the Congo. Then began one of the most tedious waits of my stay in Guinea.

The Guinean Government had been informed that the schedule for the arrival of the next plane was somewhat uncertain, but word was supposed to come confirming the arrival time. At 8:00 p.m. the same day, the telephone rang at the residence and I recognized the voice of Minister Fodeba Keita. He asked me when the airlift was to recommence. I reminded him that this was actually an operation by the United Nations and I did not know exactly when the next plane would reach Conakry. The Minister informed me that if no American planes had arrived by the next day, the Government would have to seek its own mode of transportation to the Congo. These words brought to my mind the picture of IL-18's, with Czechoslovakian pilots coming in from Accra to pick up the stranded Guinean soldiers.

I did not sleep well that night and found no difficulty in getting up at 4:30 a.m. when a ringing telephone added its noise to the heavy rainfall outside. An unfamiliar voice said that the caller was the airport commandant and wished to speak with the American Ambassador. I asked him what he wanted. He said he had been instructed to call me because an American plane was asking permission to land at the airfield. He could not grant permission unless the American Ambassador himself certified their permission to land. I told the commandant that the airlift was an operation of the United Nations. The United States had assigned these planes to the UN to be flown under the flag of the U.S. The commandant said his instructions were that I had to certify that permission to land.

I gave the commandant my word that I would come to the airport and told him that if another plane came over requesting permission to land, well, let them come on in. I also told him to call Minister Keita and ask him to meet me at the airport. I called my deputy, Tony Ross, and asked him to meet me at the airport within the next hour. I also called Major Behrens at the Hotel de France and asked him to come.



It was still raining very hard when I left the residence and dawn had broken. I reached the airport first and the saluting guards informed me that the commandant was upstairs in the restaurant with some Americans. Standing in the door of the restaurant with a crew of young American pilots was a somewhat upset airport commandant who could speak no English. He smiled with relief as I approached. The captain of the American plane stepped forward and in a broad Southern accent told me that he was surely glad to see me. He explained that a number of C-130's had landed in Dakar. One plane had continued on to Conakry, arriving there 1:00 a.m., but had not been given permission to land.

It was decided in Dakar that the difficulty was due to misunderstanding because the person in the tower had not spoken English clearly. Under the present terms of the United Nations agreement, the Czechoslovakian national was working in the tower at the Conakry airport. The next plane sent in had a French-speaking American aboard and it received permission to land. I discovered that the airport at Conakry had not been equipped for night landing and this American plane had come in to an unfamiliar airfield during a rain storm by means of the plane's landing lights and some flares sent up by the Guineans on the airfield.

I then learned that telegrams from Chiç<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>teauroux, announcing the suspension of the airlift, had failed to say that the delay was only temporary. Someone at the air base had discovered that the airport's runway was not long enough for heavily-loaded C-119 planes to take off with safety. The order had been given to take the C-119's out of operation and replace them with C-130's, which could easily take off fully loaded after a short run. Nobody had thought of notifying Conakry that there had been a change in planes or that there would be a thirteen-hour delay while sufficient C-130's were called in to carry out the airlift.

By this time Minister Keita had arrived in very good humor at the prospect that the airlift would go on. He ordered breakfast for the American crew, Major Behrens and his staff, and Ross and me. He said arrangements were made for meals to be served to all American airmen who would arrive during the next two days.

I did not let the Guinean Minister know just how happy I had been to see that one C-130 crew and learn that the airlift would go on. It was indeed an inspiring sight to see the plane take off soon after with its load of soldiers and supplies, and the arrival and departure of these planes at two- or three-hour intervals continued for the next two days. All plane traffic was stopped after 5:00 p.m. and the last crew to arrive in Conakry went in to enjoy a good meal at the Hotel de France.



During the afternoon of the first day of the arrival of the C-130's, President Toure and his Ministers arrived at the airport with General Diane Lansane, a member of the National Political Bureau, who had been promoted to the rank of general at the beginning of the Congo crisis. The General and his staff went aboard the waiting C-130 after a brief ceremony. The only problem in the whole situation was that one of the plane's engines had to be repaired and an engine had to be flown in from Morocco, so that the Guineans installed a round-the-clock watch of Guinean soldiers and everybody watched with interest when this new engine was brought in and placed in place, an operation that some had never seen before in their life.

Q: Were there any repercussions from your failing to cancel that first plane from the first part of the airlift?

MORROW: Well, in addition to the satisfaction of seeing this efficiently carried out operation, once it had gotten underway, was the satisfaction of receiving a letter from the Chief of Staff of the U.S. Air Force, Thomas D. White, congratulating me on what he called "the inspired split-second decision to continue the airlift when it had apparently but mistakenly been cancelled." (laughter). So that is what you call real luck! (laughter) Because as I said, I knew all of hell was going to break loose, that this black guy who was not a military person had withheld military orders. Cunningham ... he was frightened, you know, when he realized what was happening. And then the Major did that grinning because he just knew what he thought was going to happen. But this is the way it turned out.

So everybody was happy because we should have been told that, "Oh, this is only temporary," even before hours and hours of waiting. But the Guineans had felt that they had not been treated correctly by the UN in the first place because their soldiers had not been immediately accepted, and we'll see when they come back. May I at this point just cite what happened a little later on when it was necessary for the Guineans to be brought back from the Congo before their time was up?

Q: Oh, yes, do. Before you do that though, what was the real reason for wanting to cancel it? Or was it just supposed to be a postponement?



MORROW: It was to be postponed because the C-119's which were sent in, when they were heavily loaded, in that heat, could have crashed, because Guinea didn't have an airstrip which was sufficiently long enough for such a huge heavily-loaded plane. When they looked at the dimensions, everybody got scared and just said, "Send it back!" That's all it said. It was already loaded with soldiers by then. So I felt I had no alternative. And it did take a heck of a chance, and, also, that plane really wavered. See, I didn't know what the problem was myself, as a lay person. But I was praying that it was going to get off because it went to the end of the strip, absolutely the end, before you could see it begin to go up. So it was a matter of communications, which is very important.

I had mentioned already that we had good-will visits by ships, so what I would like to indicate was what happened when the Guinean soldiers were brought back from the Congo.

In an American LSD, the troops were recalled by His Excellency Sekou Toure in December 1960. And they had been waiting in the Congo for transportation and could get no transportation back to Guinea. So Rear Admiral Alan Reed, an outstanding naval officer, had to cancel scheduled amity visits in order to bring the Guinean troops to Conakry. And the LSD's under Reed's command reached Conakry a day or so after the departure of Leonid Brezhnev of the Soviet Union, and welcome signs and plastic Soviet flags were still on display in the main streets of Conakry. The official landing service ceremonies got underway after Admiral Reed and his aide and I called on President Toure and President Toure and his ministers returned the call.

Now in reality, President Toure came down to the port but only his ministers went aboard the flagship Hermitage to return the call. A shore cannon began firing, the first contingent of Guinean troops marched ashore, smiling at the plaudits and shouts of relatives and onlookers. It was several hours before the troops and gear could be unloaded and President Toure and his ministers left after the first contingents of the troops landed. On all sides could be heard stories of friendships struck up among the Guinean soldiers and so on.

Just before the start of a reception which we held at the Residence that night in honor of Admiral Reed and his officers, I was made an honorary member of the Hermitage crew and presented with the ship's emblem. At the conclusion of the reception, the Admiral insisted that we should be his guests at dinner at the Hotel de France. This was something that would be something of an outing for us and a change from the form of dinners at the Residence and elsewhere.



We reached Conakry at 9:15 p.m. and upon finishing a leisurely meal, Admiral Reed suggested that we take coffee aboard the ship *Hermitage*. His car led the way to the port. When it turned into the port area, its headlights revealed not only that the large iron doors were shut, but they were guarded by a squad of soldiers. I had never seen the gates closed before, day or night. I motioned to one of the guards, who stepped forward, came to attention and saluted. He seemed reluctant to answer my questions about the armed guards and the closed gate. He said finally that the locked gates and the guards had been ordered by the Defense Minister. I stepped out of the car to go over to speak to Admiral Reed and noticed a pile of plastic Soviet flags lying under the street light. This sight gave me some inkling of what might have happened.

At that moment several sailors and marines returning from shore leave came into sight. I outlined to Admiral Reed what probably had happened and instructed the guard to call the Defense Minister and let him know that I wished to enter the gates with my guests. I told the Admiral that I thought it advisable to clear all American personnel out of the vicinity. The easiest way to do this was to carry everybody out to the Residence in Donka. Reed and his officers agreed to this idea. In a moment the necessary order was given. There were approximately twenty or twenty-five American sailors, marines and officers in the gathering by the time. The sailors and marines climbed into a Navy truck and jeep which had been brought ashore for errands and shore patrol. There were two cars for the officers and three rode with my wife. Before leaving the port I told the Guinean guard that we could be reached at the Residence.

Thereupon, I led through silent streets of Conakry probably one of the strangest midnight processions that ever graced that tropical city. And when we reached the gates of the Residence in Donka, the two soldiers, assigned as guards around the clock, guards, of course, supplied by the courtesy of the Guinean Government, opened the gates and stood at attention as the curious cortege rolled by. The most startled were the cook and his helpers, who were still cleaning up from the reception. The cook told me that a call had come from the Defense Minister with information that the Defense Minister would be happy to see us down at the port. I thought I would give the Minister, who lived not far up the street from the Residence in Donka, sufficient time to reach Conakry. We learned from the assembled naval personnel that Guinean police had stopped several enlisted men who were carrying plastic Soviet flags found on the streets of Conakry. As far as could be ascertained, nobody had been arrested, but the flags had been taken by the police.



When I heard this story, I suggested that only three of us should return to Conakry until the matter was cleared up. Admiral Reed, his aide and I went back to the port supposedly to meet the Defense Minister. Once in the area, I saw the Deputy Defense Minister standing under the light near one of the gates. He stepped forward briskly and told me that the naval personnel had committed a serious offense. I asked him about the nature of this offense. Pointing dramatically to the pile of plastic Soviet flags, he said it was a serious offense to desecrate the flag of a friendly country in Guinea. I said I knew no American would willfully desecrate the flag of another nation. Furthermore, I was told that some of the flags had been picked up from the streets for souvenirs. I myself had seen flags dangling from poles and lying in the street that very morning and heard the remarks of the Embassy chauffeur that the department of public works usually cleaned up the flags very quickly after the departure of dignitaries.

When I asked the official how many men had been apprehended, he admitted that no arrests had been made, but the flags were collected. He didn't give a satisfactory explanation about locking the gates or posting a guard. I asked for further proof that the flags had been taken by the Americans. He said the proof was in two jeeps locked inside the gate. I said, "I want to see this evidence." The Deputy Minister then ordered the gates opened. I hurried over to Admiral Reed and suggested that he go aboard the Hermitage and wait for his aide and for me.

The aide and the Deputy Minister and I walked to the pier and came upon the Guinean soldier guarding two Navy jeeps. The Defense Minister, without a flashlight, reached under the seat of one of the jeeps and pulled out one Soviet flag. He walked over to the other jeep and pulled out one plastic Soviet flag. I had expected to see the jeep piled high with flags and expressed my surprise at seeing only two. I told the Minister that this was very little to go on, but I would like to have the flags for a few hours. This appeared to me to be a case of souvenir hunting which he was mistaking for something else. I reminded him that the Americans had been from one end of Conakry to the other buying souvenirs of their visit to Guinea. And I could easily understand why they might pick up these flags lying in the street.

The Deputy handed me the flags but said that he would have to have them in the morning. Before returning to the Hermitage, I walked over to the customs office, located near the main gate, to phone the all clear signal to the officers and men in Donka. Out of the darkness from the other side of the customs office came the familiar voice of an Embassy officer, Darrell Keane. Keane stepped out of an Embassy car, obviously very glad to see me, and said he knew I would come to his rescue. When I asked Keane what he was talking about, he said that he had been locked up in the court area since leaving one of the ships at 10:30 p.m. He had been told that the only way he could get out was to be released by the American Ambassador. I called the guard and told him to let Keane out of the gate. Keane made some kind of a record going through that exit. I telephoned my wife and returned to the Hermitage to await the arrival of the men from Donka. Very shortly everybody was aboard and accounted for. I told Admiral Reed that as far as I was concerned, the incident was closed.



This appeared to be an attempt to blow a minor incident into something bigger, but the whole thing had fizzled out. Reed expressed the hope that I would experience no problems because of the events of the evening. I assured him that there would be no repercussions and bade him goodbye.

The ships were to leave early that morning at high tide. I got back to Donka and found the employees still cleaning up but this time they were doing so as a result of the big midnight snack served to the Navy men. The staff had enjoyed the unusual events of the evening and went away contented when they realized they had been paid for overtime.

The only reference that ever was made to this flag incident came several weeks later when the police arrested some British seamen for gathering plastic flags. Defense Minister Keita met me at the Residence and said laughingly that he could have had my Americans picked up for the same thing. I replied that I was surely glad he had not done so because it would have meant my walking all the way out to Camp Alpha Yaya with two marines to get them out. This would have delayed the ship's departure by a few minutes and Rear Admirals never like to be late leaving a port. The conversation ended in laughter.

I had been happy with the fact that there had been visits of the American ships - as a matter of fact, both the Amity visits - and there was nothing wrong with that feeling. It was a thrilling experience to be piped aboard those flagships in December 1960, and then again in February 1961; to hear the national anthem and to inspect the guards of honor. On each occasion I had experienced that tingling sensation up and down my spine as I stood at attention during the national anthem. Each time I had that taut feeling in my throat and had the hope that there were no telltale evidences of moisture in my eyes.

Let's not overlook the two visits made to Guinea by vessels from the U.S. South Atlantic Fleet on amity patrol. One I've already mentioned, the one that brought the Guinean troops back from the Congo and also, you recall, that they were taken to the Congo by American planes commissioned by the UN. Well, the first visit was made by two destroyers under the command of Commander R.A. Foreman. The ship spent three days at the harbor in Conakry towards the end of December 1960 and afforded many Guineans their first glimpse of an American naval vessel. I accompanied Commander Foreman and two of his officers on protocol visits to the president of the National Assembly, Diallo, and Defense Minister Keita. Guinean ministers visited the commander's flagship and enlisted personnel and officers from the ship visited Conakry, played basketball with the Guineans, and purchased souvenirs. Commander Foreman invited Embassy officers and our wives aboard the USS Vogelgesang for dinner. I reciprocated by having a party the following night at the Residence, to which were invited the ship officers and staff members of the British and West German embassies. The three-days visit went off without incident and the spirits of the members of the Western embassies were lifted by the enthusiasm and the good nature of the visiting Americans.



The second visit I've already mentioned, is the one in which the Guinean soldiers were brought back from the Congo by the LSD's under the leadership of Rear Admiral Alan L. Reed.

Q: Yes...Could you tell us about Toure in America?

MORROW: All right. It had been decided even before I went to Guinea that at some point President Toure would make a State visit to the United States. And as the time drew near for President Toure's State visit, I had to devote an ever increasing amount of time to details that had to be supposedly settled before his arrival. The State Department readily assented to my suggestion and I arrived in Washington a week before the Guinean delegation to assist in last minute preparations. I didn't want anything to mar this visit, for I knew that all leaders in Africa were watching to see how Toure was going to be received. They hoped to detect whether or not any changes in United States policy towards Africa were in the making. There was no question in my mind that Negro as well as white Americans were also going to be watching the drama inherent in the reception by one of the world's most powerful nations of the young African who had persuaded his people to say no to de Gaulle.

Before leaving for Washington, I had tried without success to settle the question of transportation for the delegation from Conakry to New York. I was informed that President Toure wanted to be sure that the plane he boarded was not going to stop at any territories still under French jurisdiction. This ruled out using Air France. I could not get a satisfactory answer to the question about the regulations governing the use of military air transport service planes in the transportation of foreign heads of state outside the borders of the United States. No commercial airlines and Western powers other than France were interested at that time in establishing passenger service to Guinea.

When I left Conakry for the United States on October 19, 1959, the only thing I knew for certain regarding Toure's visit was that Toure was going to keep his word and begin his series of State visits by coming first to the United States. He was not going to Russia first, as had been reported in some quarters. It was not until after I had departed that the transportation dilemma was solved through the generosity of Prime Minister Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, who placed at President Toure's disposal a Ghanaian Airlines plane to make connections with a Pan American flight. Thanks to Nkrumah, the delegation was able to board the plane that touched down late Sunday afternoon, October 25th, at New York's International Airport.



I didn't have to be on hand in New York; it's just the official visit did not start until the following day in Washington. President and Mrs. Toure and party of six were met by Guinean Ambassador and Mrs. Telli Diallo, U.S. protocol chief Wiley Buchanan, and some New York officials. The following day, the military air transport plane bearing the Guinean delegation landed promptly at 12:00 noon at the terminal in Washington. President Toure was the first to descend from the plane. He saw, among others, waiting below to greet him, Vice President and Mrs. Nixon, Secretary of State and Mrs. Christian Herter, Chief of Staff of the United States Army and Mrs. Lemnitzer, the Dean of the Diplomatic Corps and Mrs. Sevilla Sacasa, numerous Washington officials, and myself. Ambassador Diallo, Vice President Nixon, Protocol Chief Buchanan and I accompanied President Toure to the speaker's platform and stood with him during the airport ceremony. A twenty-one gun salute, the Guinean and American national anthems, and the inspection of the honor guard by President Toure were followed by brief speeches by the Vice President and Toure.

Nixon assured Toure America would receive him warmly because of personal interests Americans had in him and the future of his country. Toure expressed the hope that his visit would bring closer relations between the United States and Guinea as well as with other emerging African nations.

I was indeed moved by the occasion. It was only later that I learned that Vice President and Mrs. Nixon, who had been vacationing in Florida, had been summoned hastily back from their visit to Washington to meet the African delegation, and they had not been too happy at these events.

Our motorcade departure from the terminal en route to Blair House, the President's guest home on Pennsylvania Avenue, by way of this traditional Washington parade route, signaled the beginning of twelve of the fullest days I have ever spent. It was exhilarating to see the more than two hundred and fifty thousand people standing along the route to catch a glimpse of the man who had taken a dramatic and solitary stand against Charles de Gaulle. The Washington onlookers, I felt, were very generous with their applause and the visitors were pleased with the warm reception on that chilly October day.

The same was to be true in New York some ten days later, when an even larger crowd greeted the visitors during a ticker-tape parade from the Battery to City Hall. By mistake, New York had on display Ghanaian flags instead of Guinean flags. They looked quite similar.



The white-tie state dinner given that night by President and Mrs. Eisenhower in honor of President and Mrs. Toure marked my second visit to the White House. And as the car in which I was riding came to a stop under the portico, the real significance of the situation suddenly struck me and I thought that only in America could something like this happen. I, a slave's grandson, was entering the official residence of the President of the United States. I was to be escorted down the long corridor to the East Room by an army official in full dress uniform. And at the door of the East Room, my name and title would be announced. And between the moment of leaving the car and mounting the White House steps, a feeling of deep regret swept over me; regret that my wife, daughter and son were far away in Guinea and not on hand to share this historic evening with me; regret that my parents were not living to see the fulfillment of their prophesy.

When President and Mrs. Eisenhower and their guests had descended from the upstairs living quarters, those of us assembled in the East Room walked slowly as couples to the state dining room at the opposite end of the White House, and where the tables, glistening with silverware, glassware and emblazoned dishes, decorated with beautiful flowers, awaited us.

I had the good fortune to be seated between the beautiful and charming Mrs. Gregor Piatigorsky, wife of the famous cellist, and Ambassador George B. Allen, then director of the USIA. The evening passed quickly and pleasantly. Light speeches of welcome and acknowledgment were made by Presidents Eisenhower and Toure and Gregor Piatigorsky was in excellent form that evening at the concert, which concluded the evening.

The real high point of the dinner, however, was the incredible performance of Colonel Walters, the interpreter, who presented us with the French version of Eisenhower's speech and the English version of Toure's reply. Without notes or props, Walters gave the complete Eisenhower speech. He translated Toure's reply paragraph by paragraph, and this was no small feat because Toure spoke in long sentences. Only a skillful interpreter could have done justice to Toure's eloquent French.

If Colonel Walters' virtuosity had impressed me at dinner, I was even more impressed during the meeting that took place between Presidents Eisenhower and Toure the next morning. A private meeting had been arranged for the two presidents. President Toure made it known that he wanted to be accompanied by the president of the Guinean National Assembly, Saifoulaye Diallo, the Economy Minister, Louis Beavogui, and the Interior Minister, Fodeba Keita. This change in plan caused me to accompany Secretary of State Herter and Assistant Secretary Satterthwaite to the Tuesday morning meeting at the White House. Guinean Ambassador Telli Diallo was also present.



We heard a very stimulating and exceedingly frank exchange in views between the two presidents, with Colonel Walters again serving as interpreter. An hour later, we left the White House to attend a meeting at the State Department, presided over by Undersecretary of State Robert Murphy. A joint working party was set up after this meeting to iron out the details of a cultural agreement which was signed on Wednesday morning by Secretary Herter, Minister Beavogui, who was appointed acting Foreign Minister on the spot by President Toure for the signing ceremony. Ambassador Diallo and I were asked to sign as witnesses. I later received an autographed photograph of the signing ceremony from Secretary Herter.

President Toure made a memorable appearance before the National Press Club at the luncheon which immediately followed the Tuesday morning meeting at the State Department. He spoke and accepted questions from the floor, which he parried with the skill acquired in debates at Paris, Dakar and Conakry, impressing veterans of the press with his stage presence. That same night we attended a dinner at the Anderson's house given by Secretary and Mrs. Herter. The afternoon of our last day in Washington, President and Mrs. Toure gave a luncheon in honor of President and Mrs. Eisenhower in the State Room at the Mayflower Hotel.

Between the official obligation of the Washington visit, President Toure and the Guinean delegation and I journeyed by presidential helicopter to Mount Vernon; participated in a wreath-laying ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in The National Cemetery in Arlington; visited the AFL-CIO headquarters for a talk with president George Meany; attended a reception at Africa House by the African Students Association; visited Howard University and met the president and faculty; visited the mosque of the Washington Islamic Center. And President and Mrs. Toure attended a reception given in their honor by the Chiefs of Mission of Guinea, Liberia, Sudan, Morocco, Tunisia, Libya, Ethiopia, the United Arab Republic and Ghana.

Contrary to the predictions of those who dubbed Toure a hardheaded Marxist theorist, but not Communist, and had insisted that he would straddle the fence between the East and the West to obtain aid from both sides, Toure made no requests for American aid during his visit, and his failure to do so surprised even some career diplomats.



Toure later explained to his people why he did not request any aid during his visit to America: "We found in the United States a real desire to come to our assistance, but we refused to present demands of this nature. Everybody knows perfectly well the different needs of different people reported to be poor. It is indeed radical nature which determines the quality of the needs but for economic ... It isn't radical nature which determines the quality of the needs, but the economic state. Consequently, nations that really wished to aid Guinea or any other developing people don't have to wait to be solicited. We are certainly not going to disguise ourselves as beggars to explain our indigence, which everybody knows, which everybody can appreciate, and to which each can loyally and in strict respect of our sovereignty, bring remedy. If we had placed African dignity so high, it is not to bargain it tomorrow against the few subsidies which, in the final analysis, could not radically suppress the effects of spoliation, exploitation, oppression, depersonalization in which colonialism caused us to submit."

On the surface, the Washington phase of the visit had gone off with clocklike precision and been eminently successful. Our guests, however, were quite disappointed on two scores, and rather dissatisfied on the third. They knew that President Eisenhower had come to the airport to welcome the President of Mexico and Premier Khrushchev of Russia. They had expected him to come meet President Toure also. They were not impressed by the fact that Vice President Nixon had cut short a Miami vacation to greet Toure. Nor did they wish to accept the explanation that President Eisenhower's bronchitis kept him from attending the ceremony on the chilly autumn day. The Guineans were further dismayed when they learned that Protocol Chief Wiley Buchanan, who had accompanied Premier Khrushchev on his U.S. tour, had assigned his deputy to accompany President Toure. They assumed that their visit was being downgraded.

The third problem arose on the eve of Toure's departure from Washington and concerned the State Department interpreter assigned for Toure's speech. The Guineans had been most happy with Colonel Walters. They were very unhappy when they learned that the interpreter assigned to cover Toure's speech at the Africa House would accompany the President throughout America. Their unhappiness was registered with the Department and with me in no uncertain terms. But it was not possible at that late date to supply a substitute. The situation became such before the tour was over that the Department of State had to provide another interpreter for the Toure speech during the New York phase of the visit.

We visited New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Ohio and also Durham. Now, Toure had wanted to go to Atlanta because years ago President Tubman had made a visit to Georgia. But it was decided this was inadvisable, so the problem to have visited the South was settled when Governor Luther Hodges of North Carolina issued an invitation for President Toure and his party to be the guests of his state.



And also, one other exception was that I was assigned to move with this group throughout the United States. As a rule, the Ambassador merely would be present in Washington, but this procedure was decided upon apparently to make the Guineans feel more at home. It worked out successfully, even though it's a little dangerous sometimes for people to have to be together for two weeks at a time, especially if there happen to be some prima donnas in the group.

Q: It's a good thing that they did have you with them considering the other things that didn't go so well between the government - our government and that delegation.

Well, you haven't mentioned Los Angeles but there is a question I wondered about. Do you want to talk about Los Angeles? And then I'll raise the question I have about it. It has to do with his visit.

MORROW: Oh yes, all right. I think I should mention specifically about the visit to Los Angeles because an unusual incident took place. The most significant event in the Los Angeles visit was a little publicized meeting in Disneyland between President Toure and John F. Kennedy, who at that time was a Senator from the state of Massachusetts. This private meeting had been planned originally for Sunday evening at the Ambassador Hotel but had been changed to Sunday morning, November 1st, at Disneyland. This was indeed an historic meeting between the two young leaders: one who was destined to become president of this great land and one who had won independence for his nation.

Senator Kennedy was then chairman of the Subcommittee on Africa of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. He had expressed a point of view about Algerian independence that did not place him on the side of the French. After introductions, the two men exchanged pleasantries about each other's youthful appearance and implied that youth was probably an important attribute for a leader in today's world.

Senator Kennedy then expressed his keen interest in Guinean independence and in the struggle confronting Toure to maintain this independence. Turning to me, he said that, with all due respect to me and to the party which I represented, he would like to go on record as assuring President Toure that if the Democratic Party came into power in the 1960 election, he would certainly have a great interest in the progress of Guinea and other emerging nations of Africa. Senator Kennedy wished President Toure well in his efforts to improve conditions in Guinea and quipped that at least the two had only one political party to deal with in Guinea even though its symbol was an elephant, syli.



In reply, President Toure expressed warmly his appreciation to the Senator for his willingness to confer with the delegation and for his expression of interest in the Guinean experience. Toure assured him that such a personal contact was most important in fostering better understanding and improved relations among nations. Toure made it clear that he and his colleagues had followed with great interest the Senator's stand on Algerian independence. He concluded by wishing Kennedy continuing success in his future endeavors.

The next time they met was at the White House in 1962 when Toure conferred with Kennedy as President of the United States. Something in the personality of this handsome, young, well-poised Senator struck a responsive cord in the Guineans. They were not more enthusiastic in their reactions to any other American than they were to Kennedy. They praised his youth, his courage, his astonishing knowledge of world affairs in general, and of the problems of developing countries in particular. They enjoyed the distinction drawn by Kennedy between the policies on Africa pursued by the two major American political parties. They believed what Kennedy had said concerning Guinea and Africa if the Democratic Party won the November 1960 election.

When the Guineans returned to Conakry, they were still talking about their meeting with Kennedy in Disneyland. There were no observers of the American political campaign of 1960 more interested than were the men who had visited America and had met Kennedy. Minister Fodeba Keita, after apologizing for appearing to interfere in the internal affairs of my country, told me that if he were an American, he would certainly vote for Kennedy because of the quality of his leadership. The Guineans were very happy when they learned in August 1960 that Kennedy, the Democratic presidential candidate, was sending Governor Averell Harriman to Africa on a fact-finding mission that included Guinea in the itinerary. They were more elated when Kennedy was elected president and they were shocked and genuinely grieved by the loss of the young president to an assassin's bullet.

Q: Dr. Morrow, why was Disneyland chosen as a site of that meeting for Kennedy and Toure? Any special reason?



MORROW: This question has often been raised because one would think that because it's such a public place the visit would be noticed. But it turned out to be the other way around. Because of its very location and the nature of it, very little was ever known about this visit. In fact, no publicity was given to it; some pictures were taken but they were taken by, I think, photographers of the USIS. So why it was changed, there was never any real explanation, but it was very odd to think of going to Disneyland. That's the first time I ever had an opportunity to visit there and, incidentally, to ride on that little train that goes around the lot and so on. The Guineans enjoyed it. But the significant thing is: Why did Kennedy take the time to come all the way out to the coast to visit with President Toure? Did he know something nobody else knew? Or was he that sure of winning the election? We don't know. But it was a very unique incident to have the U.S. Senator. Of course it was true that he was chairman of the Subcommittee on African Affairs and that gave a reason actually for visiting. But after all, Toure had come to Washington, and, as I recall, Kennedy was not at that state dinner.

Q: Where in Disneyland did the actual meeting take place?

MORROW: In ... I forgot ... I should remember the name of the place ... it was ...

Q: It was such a huge place!

MORROW: Yes it's such a huge building. No, it wasn't in what you call a fun house - I'm trying to remember. You walked in this place which had been reserved for the meeting. There's a picture in the book that will show the group emerging, and if you take a look you see that Kennedy can be seen along with Toure. You notice that there's an airline hostess in the group and quite a few people following, but they were members of the entourage. Just a few onlookers, visitors to Disneyland, but they were unaware ... they were by and large unaware. So I decided for this reason that if he, Kennedy, were to come up with an entourage and a crowd to the Ambassador Hotel, everybody would have had some knowledge of this thing; whereas by being in Disneyland, sort of unusual, people were taken by surprise.

Q: Yes. The other question I wanted to ask had to do with our relations with Guinea after that visit. How did that visit affect future relations between the United States and Guinea, considering a number of things happened while he was here that really weren't too complimentary. After all, the President didn't come to visit him as he arrived; a number of other things happened that tended to make them unhappy.



MORROW: Well, the real impact of and significance of this meeting came actually after Kennedy became the president. And a decision was made about the change of ambassador because of the change of party. And the fact that Kennedy had sent Governor Averell Harriman to visit not only Africa but specifically Guinea. And on the recommendations of Harriman - Harriman was there three days; he had very frank talks about the situation - Kennedy paid attention to the observations, I'm sure, made by Harriman, and he also paid attention to some of the reports which we had been sending back all along to Washington that had been ignored.

Q: What kind of reports?

MORROW: Reports on the fact that some effort really should be made to take Guinea seriously and to set up a type of aid program that would be beneficial to them. You see, my emphasis was always on health and education and Harriman agreed with it. Not military, military suppliers or big stadia or the showy things, but something that really would affect the people. And Kennedy had his man Attwood come in there and they were supposedly going to work in that direction. But then fate came into the picture with his assassination and, of course, after that there was obviously a change. But there was a great hope, I'm sure, among the Guineans, as soon as Kennedy came into office, and then the fact that he had Toure make a visit in 1962, and it was in contrast that he was there on the spot and Toure had the chance to feel, oh I'm meeting a friend. It was a different situation altogether. The tragedy is that Kennedy was removed from the scene ... but, then, that affected not only the Guinean situation but affected the American situation. Very unique happening, however, to see a Senator and an African leader establish a type of rapport which was established from that meeting on.

The kind of welcome we received in Guinea was carefully noted and reported by diplomats of the West and of the East, for everything that was done by the United States and by any one of the representatives was observed closely with the view of detecting possible implications for the future - future, that is, of U.S. and Guinean relations. The outside world was informed of what had happened during our arrival through a release that was filed possibly by a representative of the French press who was still covering Guinea. I was more interested, however, in an editorial appearing in the August 14th edition of the Washington Post, especially since it was the newspaper which had sharply challenged my appointment because of my color and lack of experience in diplomacy and in dealing with Communism.



The Washington Post observed: "Not long ago we had occasion to comment upon the selection of Dr. John Howard Morrow, a distinguished Negro educator, as American Ambassador to the new Republic of Guinea. We observed that there was an element of condescension in the appointment of a Negro to a Negro country and expressed the wish that a professional diplomat had been sent to this sensitive post. So far as a reception of Dr. Morrow is concerned, our misgivings appear to have been misplaced. His background of international experience will help him to represent the United States adequately in a newly independent nation subject to many pulls. Nevertheless, the principle of assignment by merit rather than by race still needs attention. For this reason, we are happy that a white diplomat, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State L. S. Mathews, has been confirmed as a new ambassador to Liberia. For years, the post in Monrovia has been regarded as a segregated position for Negro politicians, chosen not for their ability but for their color. Let us hope that the appointment of Mr. Mathews points to the evolution of a genuinely colorblind policy, meaning not merely incorporation of more qualified Negroes into the Foreign Service, but also assignment on the basis of qualification regardless of race."

It struck me as ironic that a mere outward manifestation, an airport ceremony, or a cheering populace, would cause a newspaper like the Washington Post to reassess my chance for success in Guinea, a crisis post. Surely, the basic situation had not changed in the least, for I had yet to confront the problems of this African assignment. Reading the editorial, I hoped that at the close of my tour of duty some criteria less fugitive than this might be used to assess the success or the failure of any mission, mine included.

Yet I did sense, on my first day in Guinea and afterwards, that the people of Guinea saw in me the symbol of all that the United States, even with its problems of racial discrimination and segregation, meant for freedom-loving people everywhere: liberty, justice, equality, self-determination, help for the mistreated and the downtrodden. This, I had to tell myself, is what that American flag meant flying on that old Cadillac. This is what the representative of the United States, Negro or white, meant to the people of Guinea. Perhaps this is what the Washington Post meant when it printed its second assessment.

Now three rooms had been reserved for us at the Hotel de France, which looked down on the ocean. Except for its louver boards - a concession to life a few degrees above the Equator - the Hotel de France appeared to be a grand Parisian hotel transferred to any tropical city. The hotel was still under French management and the prices matched those of any large hotel on the right bank in Paris. The food and service would later begin to reflect the difficulties brought on by the severance of economic ties between France and Guinea. The chancery had inadequate facilities, but I accepted them because of the difficulty of securing adequate office space in Conakry.



The question about the chancery in Conakry was later raised in an article in the New Leader, June 27, 1960, entitled In Guinea We Have Faith. It was written by Dr. Norman Palmer, chairman of the International Relations Program at the University of Pennsylvania after a twenty-five nation tour of Asia and Africa. Dr. Palmer reported, "The American Embassy was located on a second floor of an eight-story building. When I asked why no American flag was displayed (I was acutely conscious of the hammer and sickle so prominent a few blocks away), I was given lame excuses: a proper supporting base for the flag had not been found; the Embassy was in temporary quarters; the only flag available had forty-eight stars, and so forth."

"No United States Information Service office had been opened, though I was told that an acting USIS officer had been assigned to Guinea. The International Cooperation Administration had done almost nothing except send several people to make surveys, and by the end of 1959, no further evidence of ICA interest had been manifested."

Now toward the end of an inspection tour of American property - Embassy property, that is - I was still in a hopeful mood. However, as we drove from Conakry to a suburb called Donka, to visit the official residence for the first time, after a drive of some twenty-five or thirty minutes, the driver swerved suddenly off the main road, drove on a winding, narrow road lined by trees and thickets that gave one the impression literally of entering the brush. After a few moments, I saw in the distance a structure built of cement, similar in appearance to a California ranch house. It had been white originally, but the rainy season had deprived it of any luster it once may have had. The grounds surrounding the villa, as it was called, were overgrown with weeds and thickets that seemed an excellent breeding ground for snakes. Subsequent clearing of the ground proved that the guess about the presence of snakes, large ones, had been only too correct.

A wizened Guinean with a machete in one hand opened the gate and the car proceeded up the drive, as yet unpaved, to the entrance. When I learned that the Guinean who had opened the gate was the gardener, as well as the guardian, I wondered how he spent his time when the only things growing were the weeds, vines, and thickets that cluttered the place. I wondered too what the American Embassy staff had been doing. For almost six months they had known that an ambassador was coming to Guinea. For more than two months the identity of the American chosen had been known and his expected date of arrival certainly had not been a secret!

The Residence was not ready for us, we were told, because there was a dearth of capable carpenters, plumbers, electricians, and painters in and around Conakry after the hasty departure of most of the French. But I succeeded in getting the administrative staff of the Embassy to locate the necessary workmen within a ten-day period, which led me to believe that the same thing could have been done before my arrival. The excuses of the officer who had been in charge of getting the Residence ready were not impressive. I'd already seen the houses and grounds occupied by him and by the *chargé d'affaires*. They were in excellent condition, not to mention the outdoor swimming pool with fresh water that went with one of the houses.



My first look inside the villa, so it was called, was no more reassuring than my view of the grounds. The plaster was already showing through the paint in some of the places on the walls, the ceilings, even though this villa, constructed only a few months ago, had never been occupied. The floors of the dining room and the living room, or the salon, were done in an attractive charcoal gray tile with a white streak, ideally suited for heavy traffic in a country having six months of rain and six of dryness.

The salon, like the dining room, received ventilation through louver boards and the size could be increased by opening folding doors that led out to a good size veranda also covered with tile. The room designated on the floor plans back in Washington as a master bedroom turned out to be an ordinary-sized bedroom with an adjoining shower. At the end of the hall were two small bedrooms separated by a bathroom. Midway down the hall there was a very small water closet, opposite which were large clothes closets that could be entered through sliding door panels. Just off the entrance leading into the salon was the small room equipped with a commode and wash basin. To reach the salon when entering the villa through the doorway that looked out upon a circular driveway, it was necessary to walk down two steps. To enter the dining room from the salon it was necessary to walk up two steps.

On seeing the small kitchen that was set off from the salon, I found it difficult to visualize how we would handle the dinners and receptions we would have to give. That this kitchen did serve these very purposes once we moved in is a tribute to the ingenuity and resourcefulness of my devoted and tireless wife. There were no rooms in the Residence for visiting dignitaries, which meant that these guests would have to stay at the Hotel de France in Conakry. It was not always easy to obtain hotel reservations because many of the rooms were reserved for diplomatic representatives from the various embassies. The plans for enlarging the official Residence, discussed often during my stay in Guinea, were never acted upon, not until I had departed.



Not all the furniture earmarked for the Residence had arrived. Other pieces, designated originally to be kept in the warehouse until our arrival, had mysteriously found their way into the living rooms and kitchens of houses occupied by American personnel at the post. The furniture for the salon was piled in the middle of the floor; beds had not been put together; the oven in the kitchen stove which ran on butane gas, a very scarce commodity in Guinea, did not work. It was not until some weeks later when this stove burst into flames that we got a substitute stove from the warehouse. It had been set aside for non-existent ICA personnel. But no matter how meticulously equipment is assigned in Washington, it has a way of showing up in use in unexpected spots, and we had done our share. For that matter, many, many months were to pass before the Embassy silverware, tablecloths and napkins reached Conakry. The administrative section in Conakry had forgotten to put through the necessary requisitions before our arrival. Fortunately, my wife had had the foresight to bring along our silverware in the personal luggage along with other necessities. Only thus was it possible to begin, without embarrassing delay, the luncheons, dinners and receptions demanded by protocol.

As I surveyed the situation at the official Residence during this first inspection, I was very glad to have come without my wife. She might have found the appearance of the grounds and the villa, as well as the interior disarray, extremely frustrating. I was able to get that portion of the grounds closest to the main gate cleared off before I took her and our daughter and son to see their new home. The cleaning up of the entrance improved the villa's general appearance so much that when my wife did see the Residence and grounds for the first time, she immediately sensed the possibilities. From the moment of our occupancy, my wife toiled until she succeeded in bringing beauty to surroundings which had been drab and forlorn.

A redeeming feature of the location of the Residence was that the ocean lay just off the expanse of land extending from the house down to a small stretch of sandy beach. Often the lapping of the ocean waves and the voices of Guinean fishermen returning with the day's catch were the only noises that broke the all-enveloping silence of approaching nightfall.

The temperate ocean water, despite the alleged presence of sharks as reported by local inhabitants, was the chief source of recreation and physical fitness for my family and me. The small beach area was shared later with our neighbors, Ambassador and Mrs. Herbert Schroeder, when they arrived from the Federal Republic of Germany, West Germany. The beach was visited occasionally by the Bulgarian Ambassador and his family, who lived nearby, as well as by the Soviet Ambassador, who drove out from Conakry for a swim.



The Guineans who had worked as butlers, cooks, chauffeurs and house servants for the French, were now working for the Guinean ministers or other government officials. Many had left Guinea to seek employment in Dakar, Freetown, or Abidjan. I had to interview a great many applicants, none of whom actually had the qualifications for the job, before I selected three of the more suitable ones. I left to my wife the responsibility of training them. For a chef I selected a Foulah in his early forties, who had once served as a dishwasher and kitchen helper in Dakar. As his helper, I chose an alert, young Malinke, who knew nothing about working in a kitchen but did know how to iron shirts. For the third employee, responsible for keeping the Residence clean, I hired a young Foulah, who spoke and understood only his dialect. We retained the guardian/gardener, who spoke no French and only a smattering of Malinke and whose dialect was Kissi. We retained also the chauffeur who had driven for the Embassy before our arrival. He was an intelligent young Sousou, who spoke fairly good French.

It was inspiring and reassuring to see the manner in which my daughter and wife trained these employees and developed them into a smoothly working team with an unmistakable esprit de corps. They learned to handle effectively luncheons, dinners and receptions given for the members of the Guinean Government, the diplomatic corps and for visiting United States senators and other dignitaries. Little did our guests realize the hours spent in teaching a former dishwasher how to prepare a delicate hors d'oeuvre, or to cook French and American dishes, or in instructing two nervous young Guineans who had never before served meals, to set a table correctly and serve without spilling soup or wine on  $d\ddot{i}\frac{1}{2}collet\ddot{i}\frac{1}{2}$  guests.

The guard's inability to speak French proved to be no obstacle to his learning to understand that my wife expected him to clear the ground of all undergrowth, keep the lawns neat, and plant beds of flowers. Before our stay in Guinea was over, the guard could understand some French and had also developed some skill in gardening. He became our most faithful and trusted employee and saw to it that no harm ever came to our persons or to the Embassy property.

The fact that my wife was an excellent cook was an inestimable asset, particularly since it was impossible to obtain trained service in Guinea. At the outset, she had to do all of the cooking for the dinners and the preparation of hors d'oeuvres for receptions, in addition to being ready on time to act as hostess. At first she had to go into Conakry to do the marketing, usually done by one chef and his helper, if one had a real chef who knew what he was doing. The task of marketing became incredibly difficult as French ships stopped bringing fresh produce and meats to Guinea and the shelves in the stores were gradually depleted. Fortunately for us, my wife and daughter had made it a policy from the very start to shop at an African market as well as in the stores still run by the French. When the French disappeared from the stores and shops in Conakry and Guineans took over, my wife and daughter benefited from having patronized Guinean merchants.



At times I thought my wife possessed the skill of a magician when I tasted the dishes she miraculously created with eggs, fish, shrimp, chicken, mutton, rabbits, lobsters, couscous, manioc, spinach, mangoes, avocados, pineapples, tomatoes, rice, bananas, almonds, red and green peppers and a host of other mysterious ingredients. She could prepare a dinner for twelve or a reception for one hundred and fifty or more. The acclaim won by her cuisine in Conakry and Donka was well merited.

It was necessary to have luncheon or dinner guests at the Residence on an average of two or three times a week, not to speak of breakfasts or teas for the ladies, or to have receptions every two or three weeks. And I am keenly aware that my wife served above and beyond the call of duty. In the heat and humidity of the Guinean coastal region, she also had to accompany me on the remaining evenings to dinners, receptions and other affairs given by Guinean officials or members of the diplomatic corps. And through it all, including the six months of rainy weather and the six months of dryness each year, she retained her aplomb, patience and sunny disposition.

The considerate treatment and training received by the Guineans (laughter) employed at the Residence, news of which promptly reached the rank and file of the populace in Donka, the volunteer work of my daughter as a nurse's health aide in the hospital in Donka and later as teacher of English in the girls' lyc $\acute{e}$ e, and my son's coaching of his classmates in basketball and tennis at the boys' lyc $\acute{e}$ e, accounted to some degree for the warmth of our reception not only in Guinea but in other cities and villages of Guinea.

Q: Sir, before you move on there, the problem ... the things you faced when you looked at your residence the first time, is that experience customary?

MORROW: That is the very question that I had in my mind. Now I know we were thousands of miles away from the United States, but the fact that there was a warehouse - in the beginning I didn't know this - that was filled with different kinds of equipment, stoves, you just name whatever it is, available already in Guinea, raised a big question in my mind as to the intent of the people who were already there on the scene and - I haven't mentioned this - maybe it might come up later, but before I ever got out to Guinea, the person who was the charg $\acute{e}$  d'affaires originally had asked to be returned to the Department of State. He was supposed to stay there at least until the new ambassador would show up. This angered the people in Washington because they felt that there was an implication perhaps, shall I say the word, of racism in this man's desire to be removed before the ambassador even got there. They wouldn't acquiesce to his request and of course he was on the scene when I got to Guinea. And we got along ... and I told him I could get along with the devil. Not too long after my arrival, however, he was sent back because he no longer had rapport with the Guinean Government.



There is something else, and I might take it up in a moment because I would like to deal specifically with the reaction, be a little bit more specific about the reaction of the Embassy staff to my presence. This might answer that, and then I'll be willing to elaborate if it's necessary.

Q: Fine.

MORROW: Yes, what about the reaction of the Foreign Service office and my presence in Guinea? Several thought the State Department lacked wisdom in sending to Guinea a man with no previous experience as a diplomat. It was ... not just that the assigning of a non-career person meant that this was one more top position closed to career officers who, understandably enough, considered an ambassadorial appointment a culmination of a successful career. It was perhaps the feeling of professionals that another professional should have been called upon to handle such a precarious situation. All these officers found themselves in the position, for the first time in their lives, of serving under a black. Several were bedeviled by the stereotypes so familiar on the home front concerning second-class citizenship and the possible lowering of standards. It did not take long to dispel their erroneous ideas. In the meantime, however, I did encounter from the staff some silent treatment, some slowness in complying with requests for vital information, some resistance to instructions that greater efforts be made to establish friendlier contacts with their Guinean counterparts. There was a decided complacency among some of the Americans who were interested merely in maintaining contacts with other Western members of the diplomatic corps, of whom all but a few were equally ignorant about the thoughts and the objectives of members of the Guinean Government. It is not possible to reveal here how I set about improving the morale and organizing an effective working organization at the American Embassy. I say it is not possible, and yet I think I change my mind.

Q: Please do.

MORROW: Because at a particular point in the history of relationships with members of the Embassy staff, I made a decision which shook up Washington. I requested that the *chargé d'affaires* who had replaced the *chargé d'affaires* who wanted to go home, and his wife, be removed from the African scene. Now this is a very serious ... something to happen to a person who is a career Foreign Service officer. But the indications were that this individual had lost rapport with the Guinean Government and was ineffectual in his dealings with them. And there was also certain implication that since they had served in another section of Africa - in South Africa - where the treatment of blacks was much different from what the Guineans with their independence wanted, that they were not able to make the transition. Washington was shocked by the request, but they acquiesced. So, by December of 1960, we had such a smoothly-working team, with such excellent morale, that I was called aside by the commander of destroyers from the U.S. South Atlantic Fleet, in port for an amity visit, and questioned as to how it had been possible to develop such *esprit de corps* in a hardship post.



Q: Could I ask you a couple more questions about that? I think it would be very helpful if you could talk a little more about how you coped with people who were terribly unhelpful. How were you able to turn them around? Because that experience could have made you very bitter and could have made it impossible for you to function. How did you turn them around?

MORROW: Well, maybe it might have been a number of small things. Take one instance. Nobody in the immediate Guinean Government set up at that time could speak any English. If you were going to deal with them, you had to speak French. I'm sorry to say the shock that I discovered that few of the people who had been sent to Guinea by the State Department could speak French. One chap who was a Princeton graduate and had a little French, thought that he was up to the situation and had to translate a document that had been sent in from Washington for a particular Guinea Government, and he brought it to ask my approval. And not trying to act like the professor and so on, there were so many mistakes, I had to correct these mistakes in French. This came as a terrific shock to that young man. I didn't get after him about the situation; I quietly made the corrections, had the secretary put it into the document and then presented it to him. Now that was very good therapy for a rather swollen youngster who had such a wonderful estimate that here was some black person out of the blue who was coming into the situation not only to be the ambassador, but also confronted with having to handle a foreign language.

Then the treatment, sometimes in an embassy there's a terrific difference made by the person who is the Chief of Mission and the Chief of Mission's wife with other folks in the situation. But we were thousands of miles away as this small group. So in these affairs, my wife would not necessarily observe the fact that you had to be such and such an officer, but she would invite all of the Embassy, including the clerks and the people who lived thousands of miles away from home. Now the good old career Foreign Service officers might not have particularly liked that, but it did develop a certain kind of a strain and it came out when we had visits from Senator Symington and Mr. Harriman. I might be a little more specific at that point in time. As a matter of fact, I'm getting ready to talk in terms of ... of some people who visited besides the fleet.



As for anger, at one point I did get very angry and then realized that that would not solve the situation. So I had to remain - what is the present expression? - cool. However, a relative, let's be specific, the mother of the gentleman who eventually got sent home had come for a visit, and she was on the beach with us one day and things got around talking about the problems that were there and so on, and wondered if the situation would better itself. And I told her hopefully I thought so. I said, "But you know, I think there are some people here who hope that maybe I might become so frustrated that I'm going to quit." I said, "I've never quit anything in my life, and if I go out of Guinea, I'm going out feet first. I'm going to have to be carried out unless I am recalled by the Department." That turned out also to be good therapy. Now I have used the polite term "therapy" to not dodge the issue and to be specific. When the decision was made that the Deputy Chief of Mission was to be recalled, it put the fear of God in all of the career Foreign Service people serving in the Embassy at that time. After all, Washington had gone along with the request of the Ambassador, had paid attention to the reasons for the change. There were others who were wondering, "Is this going to happen to me?" In fact, one person came in on his own free will to almost plead his case, which was unnecessary, but it struck me that the individual must have had a guilty conscience and he must not have been doing his job and there's no telling what he might have been doing behind the scenes. But it wasn't necessary ever again during that tour of duty to have anybody else removed from the scene. Now it's a terrible aside to make the point that the gentleman's wife in this case was of no help to him, because she had a number of problems which we don't care to mention. But some of them were very obvious and became a source of embarrassment to her colleagues.

Visiting Americans, you raised the question about that.

Q: Yes.

MORROW: Senator Symington decided to include Guinea in his African itinerary, December 1959. I was not concerned whether the Senator's reported presidential aspirations motivated his African tour. The important thing was that he intended to come to Guinea and he was the first high-ranking American to visit this new African republic. He arrived fortuitously in December, shortly after President Toure's return from his highly successful visit to the United States. The Senator was accompanied by Attorney Fowler Hamilton, who became director of the Agency for International Development for a period during the Kennedy Administration. I was happy that the American Senator and his colleague were so well received by the people of Guinea. President Toure and his ministers were very pleased that an American senator and potential candidate for the Presidency had seen fit to visit their country.



Senator Symington and I called on President Toure, and with my help as interpreter, the two men had a lengthy and profitable conversation. The Senator met and talked with the leading members of the Government during his three-days stay. He asked very keen and penetrating questions during the Embassy briefings and he gave evidence of a remarkable grasp of the situation in Guinea.

Although the Senator was favorably impressed with the work being done by one English language teacher, he let me know that he was concerned that only one teacher had been sent in answer to a request from President Toure himself. Senator Symington was dismayed to discover that terms had yet to be worked out by the International Cooperation Administration which would enable some 150 Guineans to come to the United States to study under the terms of the October 1959 cultural agreement signed in Washington. Senator Symington was very impressed by the fact that wherever we went in the official car with the American Ambassadorial flags flying, Guineans, old and young, stopped to wave, called out friendly greetings, and stopped to applaud. The Senator told me that this was the first time he had ever seen this happen. I do believe that he must have concluded, after three days of this kind of treatment, that the showing of friendship was genuine and not something arranged for his visit.

I saw press reports of a news conference given by the Senator upon his return to the United States from his fifteen-day tour of African countries. His five suggestions for strengthening the U.S. position and counteracting Communist influence in Africa interested me greatly. He proposed one billion dollars in American aid each year; fewer restrictions on the use of our aid funds; increased exchange of American and African students, teachers and others to spur education in Africa; expansion of American diplomatic and assistance missions in Africa; increased training in African languages for Americans sent to Africa.



The Senator expressed the opinion that in most of the free countries of Africa, the Communist position was either equal or nearly as good as the American position, but admitted that in a few African countries, the Communist position was better. He called for better medical, better education and a higher standard of living for Africans. In his report to the U. S. Senate on his Africa trip, the Senator related the extremely favorable observations and the impressions he had heard President Toure express concerning his 1959 visit to the United States. He inserted in the Congressional Record, a message of thanks which Toure had asked him to deliver to the American people and then said the following: "Mr. President, during my recent trip to Africa, I had the great honor of meeting with leaders of some of the newly independent developing nations of that continent. None was more impressive than President Sekou Toure of the Republic of Guinea. President Toure knows and understands the problems which an emerging nation must face. He has the determination and foresight which I am sure meet the challenge of the future in a manner that will benefit his nation and the world. President Toure made a lasting impression on those who met him during his recent tour of this country. This trip was an example of what can be done between nations if there is a mutual exchange of ideas and plans. I hope that there will be many more such visits and exchanges between our peoples and those of African nations."

Fortunately for us, Senator Symington's interest in Guinea did not end with his return to America. It is my understanding that he began to question the government agencies about why so little assistance was being given to Guinea. He cited, for example, one English teacher sent to a country with a population of 2.5 million people. And when he discovered that the 150 cultural scholarships could not be granted unless the Guinean Government signed the standard ICA bilateral agreement, he questioned the validity of a stipulation which penalized innocent students.

I remain convinced that the unflagging interest and good services of Senator Symington had much to do with the securing of those thirteen American teachers who came to Guinea to conduct the English language program during the summer of 1960, and with enabling forty-two Guinean students to come to America for study in October 1960. What I have always regretted is that more Americans like Senator Symington did not come to Guinea between 1959 and 1961.

Fortunately for the United States, the presidential candidate, Senator John F. Kennedy, had arranged to send Governor Averell Harriman to Africa on a fact-finding mission in August 1960. Guinea officials did not conceal from me their pleasure at the fact that Harriman was including their country in his tour. Although the Governor came as a private citizen, he was greeted with the pomp and ceremony afforded official visitors. The Guinean Government wanted Harriman to occupy one of President Toure's guest homes, but he decided to stay at the Hotel de France. As already indicated, the official Residence, which we were occupying, had no facilities for visiting dignitaries.



At the Governor's insistence, I was present at his meeting with the Guinean ministers as well as at his meetings with President Toure and his Cabinet. I made it a point, however, to see to it that Governor Harriman had the opportunity to speak privately with President Toure at the buffet dinner given in his honor at the Presidential residence. It was during this dinner, apparently, that Toure told his visitor that I was one of the most trusted and respected members of the diplomatic corps in Guinea.

The high point in the Harriman visit came during the meeting involving Toure, his Cabinet, Harriman and myself. We had assembled in the Cabinet Room, upstairs in the Presidential residence. The meeting started on a humorous note. The Governor had prefaced his remarks by telling the Guineans that he and I were good friends but we had one major difference in that we belonged to different political parties. Upon hearing these remarks, I half rose from my seat and with a perfectly straight face offered to leave the room so that the Governor would feel free to talk to Toure. President Toure and his Cabinet members, Governor Harriman and I joined the hearty laughter that met this gesture, which had been understood by all those present.

I was proud to be on the scene that day to witness Harriman in action. He was at all times direct and to the point and could be very blunt when the occasion warranted it. He made no apologies for those things for which America stood. He spoke the language easily understood and appreciated by Toure, who responded in kind, and also revealed what was on his mind. There was no room for misunderstanding during that meeting. We caught a glimpse of Harriman as he might have been during his ambassadorship to the Soviet Union. All of us were pleased with the meeting of minds. I had the opportunity to talk with Governor Harriman for a few hours, at least four hours, during a combination breakfast-lunch at the Presidential residence the day before he left Guinea. We explored the problems confronting the United States not only in Guinea but also in Africa in general. I stressed my belief that America could make a real contribution to Africa in the areas of health, education and social welfare.

Before leaving the Presidential residence, Governor Harriman graciously presented me with his book, *Peace with Russia*, on the flyleaf of which he had written, "For John Morrow with admiration for the fine job you are doing and many thanks for your warm hospitality. Averell Harriman, August 1960."

There was no question in my mind that the visit of this man as a private citizen, on a fact-finding mission for Kennedy, did much to improve the strength in American-Guinean understanding. No propaganda pamphlets or television broadcast could have done as much as Harriman had accomplished in his face-to-face confrontation with Toure. Harriman did not share the fear expressed in some quarters that Toure and his Government had gone over the brink. I received a distinct impression that he understood that Toure was an African nationalist, struggling to make his nation viable.



It is my firm belief that the report made to presidential candidate Kennedy by Harriman on his findings in Africa had much to do with the new look for the better in African affairs at the State Department immediately after the Kennedy Administration came to power in January 1961. It may be recalled that the first important appointment made by Kennedy as President was that of G. Mennen Williams to the post of Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs. This appointment was important not because Williams knew anything about African affairs, but nobody knew better than the Africans that the new Assistant Secretary of State knew very little about their affairs. Williams' appointment was important because the President of the United States had seen fit to place a man of his stature in such a post. It implied that Williams had the ear of the President and once he could get his feet on the ground in the African arena, much-needed changes could be expected in U.S.-African policy. Unfortunately, subsequent events did not bear out completely these early hopes about the significance of Williams' appointment.

Returning to the question of the influence of the Harriman report, I do believe that his recommendations very specifically effected a change in U.S. policy toward Guinea after April 1961, when the Kennedy appointee to Guinea, Ambassador William Attwood, reported to the Republic of Guinea. I was very happy for my successor, Ambassador Attwood, that there was at the beginning this intelligent appraisal of the Guinean situation and a recognition of the need to cast aside outmoded procedures, techniques, and policies for dealing with the African nations.

I must admit this. The reception received by a group of distinguished Americans that came to Guinea in the latter part of December 1960 differed sharply from that received by either Senator Symington or Governor Harriman. The delegation was made up of Senator Frank Church, Democrat, Idaho; Senator Gale W. McGee, Democrat, Wyoming; Senator Frank E. Moss, Democrat, Utah; and Edward Kennedy, youngest brother of the President-elect. Young Kennedy had joined the Senators and their party for the last leg of their African fact-finding tour, much to the dismay of some of the Senators. I have often asked myself why it was that this last group of American dignitaries to visit Guinea during my tour of duty received such a cool reception. I think the answer is to be found in the events occurring just prior to their arrival.



If it had been within my power to suggest a date for the visit, I certainly would have put it off until a more propitious moment. I had been well aware that President Toure and his ministers were very much irked by the role of the United States delegation at the United Nations and the role it had played in seating in the U.N. General Assembly the Congolese delegation sponsored by President Kasavubu. The Guinean delegation at the United Nations had given all out support to the rival Congolese delegation sponsored by their friend, Patrice Lumumba, who had insisted that he and not Kasavubu was the legal head of the central government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. I was aware also that Toure was very unhappy about the treatment received by a message which he had sent directly to President Eisenhower, taking issue with Eisenhower over U.S. support for the U.N. policy in the strife-torn Congolese Republic. Toure's implied charges that the United States was allied with those nations opposing freedom for the Congo and for other African states, had drawn a strong reply from President Eisenhower, which was carried on the front pages of the American newspapers on November 26, 1960. In the reply, President Eisenhower declared emphatically that the United States had been in the forefront of those nations favoring the emancipation of all peoples. Eisenhower asserted that the United States had warmly welcomed the creation of the independent Congo and had upheld the unity and territorial integrity of the Congolese Republic through the United Nations and not by means of unilateral intervention in Congolese affairs. Toure had sent a message to President-elect Kennedy also that he had received a rebuff on this score, when Kennedy let him know that he too was supporting the stand taken by President Eisenhower on the role played by the United Nations in the Congo.

It seems that Kennedy's reply surprised and nettled Toure, who had expected a difference of opinion between Eisenhower and Kennedy. Toure reacted by carrying out his December 1960 threat to recall Guinean troops in the Congo made during the formation of the Ghana-Guinea-Mali Union and cabled the U.N. Security Council that he was withdrawing four hundred more troops, four hundred troops, that is, Guinean troops, stationed in the Congo because of the violation of the U.N. charter by the U.N. force in the Congo.

And when the American Senators and Edward Kennedy reached Guinea, President Toure had not returned from an official visit to Sierra Leone. I had arranged, however, for my visitors to see Toure on the following Monday morning prior to their departure from Guinea. In the meantime, the word reached Conakry that an attempt had been made in Sierra Leone to sabotage the helicopter, a gift from the Soviet Union, in which Toure was traveling. It was reported that dirt had been placed in the oil line of the helicopter and it had been necessary to fly a second plane to Sierra Leona to return the Presidential party to Conakry. I did not expect that this incident, if true, was going to put Sekou Toure in a congenial mood for meeting Monday morning guests.



It should not be difficult to imagine what happened when we arrived in the Presidential residence on that morning. First thing I noticed was that the guards did not come forward to greet me with their usual alacrity. I summoned the guard and asked him to notify the Cabinet Chief that my guests and I had arrived for our meeting with President Toure and his Cabinet. I presumed the guard delivered the message, for he went into the office of the Cabinet Chief. When he did not return with a reply and the Cabinet Chief did not appear, I thought this was somewhat strange. As the minutes ticked by and no one appeared, I told the delegation members that I had begun to suspect that the delay had some diplomatic implications. I had never waited to get into President Toure's office before, whether I came with visitors or alone. My remarks brought the observation from one of the more candid members of the American delegation that they had waited a very long while in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia) before getting in to see Emperor Haile Selassie.

Prodded by the thoughts that we had not kept the Guinean delegation waiting at any of the appointments at the White House or at the State Department in the fall of 1959, and by my determination not to have the Addis Ababa visitor wait repeated in Conakry, I stepped into the hall and called the guard. I told him to inform the Cabinet Chief that I had found it impossible to wait any longer and was therefore returning to the Embassy with my guests. The guard turned in a flash and sprinted up the stairs to the Cabinet Chief's office. Before I could re-enter the waiting room to suggest to Senator Church, the delegation leader, that we should leave, the guard returned to say that the President wished to see us. As I climbed the stairs to the Cabinet Room, I was not sanguine about our chances for a successful exchange of views.

Upon entering the Cabinet Room, in which the ministers had already taken seats around the long table, I noticed immediately that President Toure appeared tired and was not his usual cordial self. I was conscious also of the absence of banter usually exchanged among the young ministers. There was something unusually solemn about this pre-meeting atmosphere.

Scarcely had I finished introducing the Senators and young Kennedy before Toure launched into a lengthy discussion of Guinean history and geography. He skirted the vital problems which he and I knew from past experience American officials wanted to discuss. I suddenly realized that Toure knew that the delegation was supposed to go directly from the Presidential residence to the airport to depart for Dakar, their last stop. I decided that he was deliberately using up time to avoid an extended question period.

When the Senators and Kennedy did get the opportunity to ask questions, the answers given were not very relevant. It became obvious that Toure was not going out of his way to impress these visitors favorably. I could see the implication for the future if the American delegation had left with the feeling that it had been impossible to get first-hand information on troublesome problems which threatened American-Guinean relations.



On February 12, 1961, there appeared in the United States a document reporting on the African tour made by the U.S. Senators. The portion of this report devoted exclusively to Guinea clearly precluded any possible implementation of the bilateral agreement which the Minister of Plan, N'Famara Keita and I had signed on September 30, 1960 in Conakry. I cannot say that I was surprised by this report, but I was sorry that the conclusions had been reached after only one meeting with Toure held under none-too-favorable circumstances.

The report said in part: "There are indications that the performance of the bloc in Guinea has not measured up to its expansive promises. We see no reason for the United States to undertake to obscure this development or to assist any Communist effort to make Guinea an example of what bloc aid can accomplish. There are limits to our resources and too many African countries which need our help and which respect our motives."

"Another issue causing us to advocate a wait-and-see approach is a recent dispatch of large quantities of military supplies from the bloc. The implausible explanation Guinea offers regarding its need for such arms, including aircraft guns, anti-aircraft guns, concerns the purported discovery of arms caches in connection with the plot against its borders. Pending clear evidence that Guinea indeed wants our friendship and wishes to and can preserve its independence for the bloc, we believe that the United States should maintain no more than a token aid program just to keep the door open."

There, spelled out in black and white, for the first time, was the very policy which the United States had been following in Guinea since 1959. Nobody had been willing to admit this to me before even though I had sought through various means to discover what policy had been set for this country, where the American Embassy staff had tried unceasingly to establish mutual understanding. In my estimation, it would have been much fairer had I been told this very frankly in Washington before departing for Guinea. If it had not been possible to determine the guidelines before my departure, at least I should have been told the day, the hour, the minute the United States decided its policy! It was a matter of record that we lived in hope; we never despaired; we never stopped fighting for what we thought should be done to assist this developing country in its struggle through a desperate and frustrating period.



The report made by the American delegation came as a result of its contact, treatment and observations in Guinea. I hold Toure himself responsible for some of the conclusions drawn. I think that he was most unpolitical and shortsighted not to have made an honest effort to answer the queries put to him by Church and his colleagues. He had everything to gain, nothing to lose. The press had already printed all kinds of unfavorable things about Guinea - some true, some untrue. He didn't have to worry about the exposure of skeletons in the closet. He had only to slug it out as he had done with Averell Harriman and the Senators might have been impressed by his forthrightness whether or not they agreed with him. Instead, angry at the U.S. policy and the United Nations, provoked by Eisenhower's and Kennedy's replies to his allegations, morose over the alleged sabotage attempts in Sierra Leone, this young African leader stepped to the plate in the U.S. Senate's world series. He did not go down swinging; he was called out on strikes.

Senator Church saw fit to insert in the Congressional Record, the appendix, January 30, 1961, very complimentary remarks concerning my ability as a diplomat and representative of the United States abroad. But Senator Symington had done the same thing upon his return to America in the Congressional Record-Senate, February 1, 1960, page 1512. My real concern was the knowledge after reading the Church report, that tangible progress toward meeting the problems of human suffering abounding in Guinea was not going to be made during the time that I would be there.

Oh, by the way, Deputy Undersecretary of State Loy Henderson came to Guinea in the course of an October 1960 inspection tour of American embassies and consulates in Sub-Saharan Africa. And although Henderson's visit involved American business, strictly speaking, I saw to it that he got to converse with Minister Abdourahmane Diallo, Acting President, in the absence of Toure. My good friend, C. Vaughn Ferguson, served as the interpreter during Henderson's conversations with Diallo. It is to the everlasting credit of Loy Henderson that he did his best to secure for me the kind of administrative support which I requested, but not even Henderson could overcome overnight the dearth of trained, knowledgeable Foreign Service personnel in hardship posts in Africa or Asia.

We accompanied this twenty-one man party of American officials to the airport on October 26, 1960. The guards waved us through customs with a smile and a sharp salute. The passports had already been delivered to the departing visitors, so we walked out to the waiting MATS plane. I asked the young Embassy officer once again if he had checked to see that the passports were in order, and he answered me in the affirmative. I stayed aboard the plane a moment to wish the delegation a safe trip to Sierra Leone and a safe return to America. The plane took off and was soon out of sight.



An agitated and displeased commandant of the airport met me at the door of the waiting room. In excited tones he explained that the Americans had left Guinea without filling out exit visas and declarations of foreign currency. I told him that this had been handled by the Guinean Foreign Ministry, and I had been assured that all was in order for a smooth departure. I asked him to check with the Ministry, but he insisted that the Ministry did not run the airfield. He said he intended to instruct the tower to recall the plane. I assured him that he was making a grave mistake, especially since his Government had welcomed these distinguished visitors and had given assurances that all was in order for their departure from Guinea. I suggested again that he would do well to phone the Ministry. The commandant turned and walked toward the tower. Our conversation lasted almost twenty minutes and I hoped that the plane was out of range of the tower signal by that time. Within five minutes, however, the commandant came strutting back to announce that the tower had radioed the plane and the pilot had agreed to return. I told the commandant that not a single American was going to get off that plane and set foot on Guinean soil and that if he had anything he wanted to sign, it would have to be taken to the plane. I told him that anybody who got on or off that plane would have to climb over me.

Twenty minutes later the plane landed. I went aboard and asked Loy Henderson why the plane had returned, particularly since the Guinean Foreign Ministry had handled the passports. He said the decision to return was made after a brief conference aboard. It was felt that future American-Guinean relations would be better off if the letters of the law were obeyed.

Meanwhile, two guards had brought the necessary visa and currency cards to the door of the plane; these cards were filled out, stamped and returned to the commandant's office. For the second time that day I bade the visitors farewell, only this time I asked them not to return (laughter) even if they heard that I was a prisoner at the airport. Everybody aboard laughed; the plane took off.

I returned to the Embassy to prepare one of the stiffest notes that would be sent during my tour in Guinea. This note brought back the quickest response ever exchanged in Guinea. The Guinean note graciously apologized for the unfortunate incident created only through misunderstanding on the part of certain functionaries in the Ministry and at the airport. They reiterated the pleasure on the part of the Guinean Government to have welcomed the distinguished American visitors. Several days later I received a personal letter from Loy Henderson with a dateline Monrovia, Liberia. He said in part: "Dear John, it was a pleasure to see you during my two visits to Conakry. Please don't feel concerned about our early return visit. It did us no harm and it may be that the government of Guinea will be conscious of our desire to respect its sovereignty." (Laughter).

I think perhaps I should say a word about a couple of U.S. delegations that made visits to independence celebrations.



Not long after the West German-Guinean misunderstanding, I received word from the State Department that I had been designated by President Eisenhower to be one of the representatives with the rank of special ambassador to attend the ceremonies at Léopoldville in connection with the independence celebration of the Democratic Republic of the Congo scheduled for the last three days of June 1960. I was pleased with the assignment and looked forward to visiting this Republic, which had been granted its independence so suddenly by the Belgian Government after a somewhat confused round-table conference in Brussels. I was happy also at the prospect of renewing my acquaintance with former Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs, Robert Murphy, who was to head the American delegation to the Congo. It will be recalled that Mr. Murphy had presided over the meeting held at the State Department in the fall of 1959 during the State visit of Sekou Toure. Mr. Murphy had been very helpful to me in ironing out certain troublesome last minute details.

My experience in Guinea made me wonder, however, how the Congolese experiment was going to work out. I was concerned of the possible implications of the policy of the Belgian Government in limiting the opportunities for higher education to only a very few Congolese. The Belgians had thought, in all probability, that their policy had prevented the awakening of false hopes in the minds of the great mass of Congolese, who then remained more easily manageable. Under the French regime, Guinea had been very far from the top of the list of territories from which students could go to France for advanced study. Yet I had reason to believe that even Guinea had had more students trained abroad than had the Congolese.

If the Guinean Government was experiencing so much difficulty in maintaining its sovereignty and its independence, how could the Congolese Government expect to be better off when the Belgians moved out? At this particular stage, the Belgians might have been lulled into thinking that their continued presence in the Congo was an absolute must, for they thought the Congolese would fail miserably without Belgian technical and administrative skills.

Mr. Murphy had reported correctly that there was a mood of hope in the Congo before and during the independence celebration. But I personally found it extremely difficult to accept this hope, especially after having lived in Guinea for eleven months. Furthermore, I was unwilling to discount the serious disturbances among the rival political and tribal groups in the Congo, which had the earmarks of an uprising. What was clear before independence, and became increasingly clear after independence, was that its leaders, Kasavubu and Lumumba, were pulling in opposite directions.

This had not been the case in Guinea on the eve of independence. Moreover, it was well known even outside the Congo that Kasavubu was more the Belgians' choice than Lumumba, who was a veritable thorn in the Belgians' side. It interested me that the Guineans were so intensely for Lumumba, and I went to the Congo with resolve to observe both these leaders closely with the hope of gaining some insight into the Congolese future.



Of course, I realized the impossibility of unraveling the complex Congolese situation during a three-day ceremonial visit. I did not have the foresight to anticipate, however, that little more than one month later the Congo would be torn with strife and slaughter and Belgian nationals would be fleeing for their lives.

I had to fly from Conakry to Dakar to meet the military air transport service plane bringing the rest of the American delegation to the Congo. We reached the airport in Léopoldville the following evening, not long after the arrival of the official party from Belgium, and there was a great deal of excitement and bustle.

Among the Congolese officials on hand to greet us at the airport was Antoine Gizenga whom I had seen in Guinea several months before when he visited Conakry on the way back to Léopoldville from the Brussels round-table conference. At the moment when Gizenga was shaking my hand, a photographer's flash bulb popped, and I remarked jokingly to C. Vaughn Ferguson, who later was appointed Ambassador to the Malagasy Republic, that I wondered what the State Department officials would have thought of my being in such a picture two or three months before.

There were no visible signs of the uneasy state of affairs that had preceded independence, and the Belgian Government had gone to great lengths to prepare an impressive series of inaugural events: receptions, dinners, luncheons, parades, culture events and fireworks. I was particularly well received by Congolese officials, which I attributed to my being accredited to the government of the Republic of Guinea and to the high regard Lumumba and the other Congolese had for President Toure. Some officials told me very frankly that they had never before seen a U.S. ambassador who was a black.

I noticed the name of Lumumba was conspicuously absent from the list of those participating in the solemn ceremony of granting and accepting Congolese independence. Indeed, the omission of his name made more of an impact than if it had been printed in bold letters. Nevertheless, as delegate William Paley, board chairman of CBS, and I sought seats in the crowded and impressively new Parliament chamber, we had no inkling of the real drama that would be played on that platform where we saw King Baudouin and the Belgian and Congolese ministers quietly awaiting the opening of the morning program on June 30.

King Baudouin, as was to be expected, made a brief, polite and tactful statement relinquishing his authority to rule the Congo and granting full independence to the former territory. President Kasavubu, with a grace that momentarily diverted attention from his somewhat short and plump figure, accepted the authority on behalf of his Republic in a tempered and well-delivered speech of acceptance.



Thinking the ceremony about over, William Paley had just turned to say something to me when we both saw a tall, thin, ebony-hued young man get up from his seat on the platform and rush toward the microphone. When I saw the goatee, I knew that this was Lumumba. The Congolese Prime Minister who had been left out at the morning ceremonies, launched into a vitriolic attack on the Belgians, citing the wrongs and injustices inflicted upon the hapless Congolese during Belgian occupation. Lumumba had seized the initiative in this solemn moment and was announcing to the world that he could not be silenced through the subterfuge of omitting his name from the program.

To say that Lumumba's precipitous action caught everybody by surprise - Congolese, Belgians, visiting African dignitaries, Americans - would be an understatement. All of us looked to see whether the King and his ministers were going to leave the platform in protest. All of the King's feelings were clearly visible and his ministers made no effort to conceal their anger and shock. No Belgian moved. The hush which at first descended over the audience was broken by hearty applause by Lumumba's followers. Lumumba, the wily, ruthless, fiery politician was playing to the grandstand, but he was also making his bid for power. And it was evident that he was not wanting for followers, if the number of Congolese applauding had any significance.

Lumumba's action that morning revealed his lack of common sense, propriety, timing and judgment. Many Congolese and Belgians felt that their family squabbles should be settled behind closed doors, not aired in public before invited guests. The Prime Minister's act brought to the surface the instability and rashness which would eventually be his undoing. It warned all those within hearing that he was a man who was going to be dangerous in the in-fighting and who would not hesitate to go for the jugular. Yet, Lumumba lashing out in some of the most bitter French I have ever heard, expressed the hidden sentiments not only of some of the Congolese listeners, but also of some of the visiting African dignitaries as he castigated the Belgians for their exploitation of the defenseless Congolese and for their avariciousness.

As Lumumba turned to the microphone, the session broke up amid the loud buzzing of excited voices. Outside the Parliament chamber I saw a crowd collecting around Lumumba and soon heard the angry agitated voices of Congolese ministers all trying to speak at once. This noise did not subside until a Belgian, accompanied by a Congolese official, approached the group and spoke a few words. The crowd dispersed and order reigned once again.



At the crowded luncheon following the tension-packed morning session, a hush once again swept the guests when Patrice Lumumba got up to speak. I looked at him and wondered what else could he possibly have to say. I had underestimated Lumumba's versatility and his ability to change position. Speaking in tones no longer strident, wearing a somewhat subdued air, Lumumba proceeded to sing the praises of those whom he had condemned one hour ago. He cited the constructive things done by the Belgians during their regime in the Congo and concluded his startling remarks with the hope that cooperation and understanding between the Congolese and the Belgians would continue after independence. I left the table and immediately went in search of a Congolese official whom I had met in Conakry several months before. I asked him to explain Mr. Lumumba's conduct. The official was reluctant to talk. He hastily explained, however, that the Belgian ministers had told Lumumba and the Congolese ministers that the King would leave Léopoldville that day if Lumumba did not retract his harsh accusations of the morning. Lumumba seemingly had found it difficult to understand what all this fuss was about, for he had merely repeated what he had been saying all the time across the length and breadth of the Congo. Lumumba overlooked the fact that formally he had not been talking in the presence of the King, a captive listener on the occasion of the surrendering of the territory. Sekou Toure had likewise spoken out one day in the presence of a distinguished visitor, General de Gaulle. But on that August day of 1958, Toure had taken the calculated risk and had spoken from a well-prepared text submitted in advance, so it is said, to the French Governor-General of Guinea.

I did not react to Lumumba at all in the same fashion in which I had reacted to Sekou Toure. Lumumba puzzled me, it is true, but he did not impress me. I respected Toure, but I could not bring myself to respect Lumumba. I might have had more respect for him if, despite his blatant show of poor manners and his lack of diplomacy, he had refused to recant and had stood by his bristling statement of the morning. Toure would not have recanted; he would have gone to perdition first. Naturally, I could understand how a politician under pressure from the angry Belgian ministers and his conciliatory Congolese colleagues, fearful that the King's departure would mar the celebration, might opt to compromise.

But to recant publicly, in such a humiliating fashion, after exhibiting such defiance a short time before, did not, in my opinion, engender respect. Lumumba's exercise in poor taste and political expediency caused me to think back over the events of the two preceding days. I was faintly aware that whenever King Baudouin appeared in public, President Kasavubu had always been at his side, engaging him in conversation. In each instance, Lumumba had been seated or standing off to one side. And every time a cameraman approached to photograph the King and Kasavubu, Lumumba had edged his chair over to get into the picture or had jumped out of his seat, rushed up to Kasavubu and engaged his attention.



This was not a matter of my imagination because these maneuvers had been repeated too many times within 48 hours. I did begin to question how long a man with the drive, ambition and amour-propre of Lumumba was going to allow himself publicly to be relegated to a secondary position. After all, Lumumba probably had a sense of history as well as an image of himself as a great leader.

Oh, there's little point in conjecturing about what might have happened if the Belgians and Congolese responsible for planning the celebration ceremonies had given a more prominent role to Lumumba in the hope of dissipating the intense rivalry smoldering between him and Kasavubu. This would have brought simply a temporary truce. The roots of the problems went much deeper, and the Belgians themselves must be held responsible for subsequent events in the Congo. It is not necessary to hark back to the time when Leopold II, whose reign between 1865 and 1909 was characterized by industrial and colonial expansion, and whose ruthless greed and condonation of very harsh treatment of Congolese in the Congo free states then under his personal rule provoked international protests, which led to this area's being ceded to Belgium in 1908. Nor is it necessary to discuss the Belgian controlled Union Minière du Haut-Katanga, operating in the Katanga Province that had once produced most of the world's supply of cobalt as well as quantities of uranium, radium, copper, tin and diamonds. It's small wonder that Moïse Tshombe could not resist the temptation to secede with the Katanga Province as his base of operations.

The Belgians had not prepared the Congolese for self-rule. They had been satisfied to keep the situation under control by playing one tribal group against another, and many of the improvements in sanitation, roads, buildings and so forth came about as a result of creating a more favorable condition by the thousands of Belgian civil servants and business people living and working in the Congo. The French had done somewhat the same thing in Guinea, for the same reason, and when the freedom avalanche began to gain momentum in the Congo, the Belgians gave in to the pressure, stepped out, not in anger as de Gaulle in Guinea, but in panic. The United Nations could not find a satisfactory solution to the mess which resulted from the poorly managed Belgium pullout.



One footnote about the trip to the Congo. President Toure's half brother, Minister Toure, and the Guinean Consul asked us for a ride back to Accra in Ghana. And it had been previously decided that the military transport plane was to land in Conakry instead of going to Dakar to let me off, and I had persuaded the American delegation to come to the Residence for light refreshments, to be followed by a quick tour of Conakry. When we landed in Accra and Minister Toure and the Consul departed with their baggage, I learned from the American Ambassador, who met the plane, that President Toure's plane had already left Accra that morning. Within moments, Minister Toure reappeared - this is Toure's brother, half brother, expressing apologies and asking if he might accompany us to Conakry. I immediately wired ahead to let the Guinean Government know that Minister Ishmael Toure was returning with us. I also suggested that he invite all available Guinean ministers and Western diplomats to the impromptu gathering at the Residence.

As we circled the Conakry airport preparatory to making what was to be the first landing of an American plane on Guinean soil, I could see a large crowd assembled in the waiting room. With Minister Toure leading the way, we filed out of the plane to find all the Guinean ministers and Western diplomats who were in and around Conakry that Saturday, waiting to greet the minister and the visiting American dignitaries. At the entrance to the airport we found a long line of cars with a police escort. The American delegation was assigned seats in the cars with various Guinean ministers and the procession made its way from the airport to the Residence in Donka. After the brief reception we re-entered the cars, drove through the streets of Conakry, and returned to the airport.

It should not be difficult to imagine the bewilderment not only of my Western colleagues but also of the Communist bloc diplomats at the unaccustomed sight of Guinean ministers and American visitors riding together through the streets of Donka and Conakry. With the slow pace and the open cars, there was no difficulty seeing who was talking to whom. As somebody remarked, the United States got as much benefit in good will for bringing Minister Ishmael Toure back from the Congo as it did in opening a cultural center in Conakry.

In November 1960 I was again designated by President Eisenhower to be a representative with the rank of Special Ambassador to an independence celebration. This time it was a celebration of the independence of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania to be held in Nouakchott beginning November 27. On this occasion the President sent just two of us, the other being Henry S. Villard, the American Ambassador at Dakar. Ambassador Villard was sent as the President's personal representative, which meant that he was the ranking member authorized to convey to the Mauritanian President the congratulatory statement from the United States and the personal gift of President Eisenhower.



The colorful ceremony that took place in Nouakchott, a city that had been constructed literally in a portion of the desert, went off with smoothness and precision that were admirable. A speech turning over authority delivered by French Minister Debré<sup>1/2</sup> and acceptance speech by President Mokhtar Ould Daddah were well received by the Mauritians and visitors. Feeding the more than a thousand visitors was a veritable tour de force made possible by supplies flown in from Dakar and France. The parade featuring Mauritanian paratroopers in camouflaged uniforms and soldiers in desert garb, mounted on camels, added to the exotic setting. The friendly and hospitable Mauritians had the knack of making visitors feel welcomed. I regretted very much when their first effort to enter the United Nations was thwarted. The Mauritanian Republic was finally admitted to the United Nations in 1961 despite the opposition of Morocco, which laid claim to a portion of the territory.

Q: Before we get to the lessons that you learned from Guinea and from Africa in general, when we talked about the initial problems you had with your Embassy staff and how those were resolved, you made the statement that after all there were a number of crises that we faced, and the Guinean Government leaders weren't really interested in speaking to anybody but the Chief - the Chief of Mission, the Ambassador - and not anybody underneath him, so to speak. Could you talk a little about some of those crises that stand out in your mind?

MORROW: I mentioned the plot, the "complot". When Toure was making these speeches in public, we could call them harangues, which literally were speeches condemning to death Ibrahima Diallo and El-Hadj Mohammed Lamine Kaba as well as some other people, some in absentia. He was also asking for countries who respected Guinean sovereignty to come forth to aid Guinea or to stand by in case there were an attack. Now, why this tactic was employed is questionable, but it was perfectly obvious that the United States was not going to step up and say, "All right, in a time of trouble, we shall come to your aid," which of course was a gesture which had already been made by Czechoslovakia and Russia.

And it was my duty to convey this information that we were working through the United Nations and were not engaged in any unilateral dealings with the Guinean Government. Ah, this is a real crisis point and I had to convey this message. However, let me say this, that despite this concept of always wanting to deal with the Chief, it was also a matter of an education process because in some of the situations I would deliberately send the economic officer or the political officer to one of the ministries wherever there was a problem, whether it was the Ministry of Plan or Foreign Affairs, with messages to be conveyed to the Government instead of always being present on the scene as if nothing could happen unless I were present. Because you have to be able to delegate authority and this is what I was trying to also convey to the young Guinean ministers, who would sometimes call and say, "Well, we thought that you were going to ..." and I would say "Look, I can't be everywhere at one time and run our shop in that same fashion."



The complot, I think, was one of the most serious situations that I could think of and the incident about when the gates were closed. I didn't want to dwell upon that too much, but actually the Admiral and his ship had been told not to leave the port. There was an implication that the Guinean Government wanted to investigate the question of the flags further, the plastic flags, but as you well know, ships have to leave according to the tide and the tide was coming in at a particular time that morning - during the early morning hours - the Admiral felt in the middle. I told him to go ahead and make his departure and I would be behind to face whatever music there might be.

Now I didn't state this when I first talked about the question of what happened when the LSD's brought the Guineans back to the Congo, but that was a serious situation and it was felt that there would be repercussions. But somehow or another it was turned off when I told the Minister Fodeba Keita that I wouldn't want to have had to walk way out to the Camp Alpha Yaya with just two marines to free our sailors and soldiers. The implication was that with just two American marines, it would have been possible to free our sailors or soldiers had they been arrested by the Guinean Government. Said in a joke but it carried its full meaning ... Just off-hand, well some things which might be considered not too important at that point seemed to threaten some members of our Embassy ... as well as the Guinean Government, who were sort of on edge; everything seemed to have been a crisis. In other words, I sometimes felt that the situation was being overplayed by all concerned. It is true though that the Guinean ministers sometimes were haunted by the fact that they couldn't say that something or that something would not be done until it had been checked with Toure. If Toure were out in the brush someplace, then that meant everything stopped. There's an implication that something like this happened during President Carter's presidency, where he was the type of person who wanted to oversee everything. And it is impossible for a person in an administrative position with a huge set-up like, for example, the United States Government or even a small situation like the Guinean Government, for one person always to be able to handle every situation. I would strongly suspect now that for some of the people who have survived, who've lived, that there has been much more of this delegation and decentralization than in the beginning, but the chieftain concept ...



I just want to give a little summary to some extent that could be listed in the way of what did I learn in the Guinean situation? I learned not only from the people of Guinea but also of other African nations of their great hope for immediate change. They wanted all the evidence of modern civilization, including hydroelectric dams. They did not find it easy to forget the effects of colonialism that had promoted race and class discrimination. And I found out too that Africans still looked to America for support because of their intrinsic belief that America was the land of the original anti-colonial people - this notwithstanding America's own racial problem. I'm not being immodest when I confess that one of the most stimulating experiences in my life was that opportunity to have served under President Eisenhower as the first American Ambassador to the first French West African nation to achieve independence from France. And my tour of duty was from July 1959 to March 1961. It was indeed a challenge to have served at the United Nations under the Kennedy Administration where I had the unique chance to work with the late elder statesman and diplomat, Ambassador Adlai Stevenson. If time permits, I might have a footnote to add about the U.N. experience.

I shall not soon forget having been sent to Paris by President Kennedy as head of the American delegation at UNESCO entrusted with the difficult responsibility of implementing the United States policy in that international organization with a membership in 1961 of some 113 nations. And, in spite of the blot of the recent thunderings of Watergate and serious questions being raised today about U.S. foreign policy; in spite of the efforts of the Ku Klux Klan, for example, to turn back the pages of history for blacks and other minorities in America.

In spite of these problems, I still make bold to say these words once uttered by the late John F. Kennedy: "Let the public service be a proud and lively career and that every man and woman in any area of our national government be able to say with pride and honor in future years, I served the United States Government in that hour of our nation's need."

On the surface it appeared that Guinean-American relations had been improving since 1962. And suddenly on October 30, 1966, President Toure ordered the arrest of the newly arrived American Ambassador, Robinson McIlvaine, and one week later announced the expulsion of 62 Peace Corps volunteers and their dependents. A strong protest in the United States State Department brought about the release of Ambassador McIlvaine in less than 24 hours. An unruly mob broke furniture and windows at the Ambassador's residence shortly after his release.



McIlvaine was called back to Washington for consultation but there was not an outright break between the U. S. and Guinea. Fortunately, later reports out of Guinea indicated the relations between this Republic and the United States did improve markedly in 1968. Mutual trust appeared to have replaced suspicion, and there seemed to be more mutual confidence and a willingness to let each to go his own way. It is true also that the International Bank of Reconstruction and Development agreed on September 18, 1968 to lend Guinea 64.5 million dollars over a period of twenty-four years to help construct an 85-mile railroad from the mines of Fria to a port that would be constructed along the Atlantic coast. The United States made a loan of 21 million dollars in Guinean francs to be used for defraying local currency cost of constructing this railroad. The Peace Corps, expelled in October 1966, was invited back to Guinea and anticipated sending some twenty or thirty volunteers in June of 1969. Two middle-aged Americans ... American blacks from Detroit, Mr. and Mrs. Clifford Sharp moved to Guinea in October 1968 to teach in the National Arts Trade School in Conakry. Mr. Sharp taught welding, and his wife taught English. Mr. Sharp also set up the first-class garage so sorely needed in Conakry.

It would appear that Sekou Toure and the last of the original African revolutionaries, are still paying lip service to revolution, deeming it advisable to forego new economic links - to forge, not forego, forge new economic links with the World Bank as well as the United States and the rest of the world. Maybe he thought he would thus be able to put off a while longer at least the fate of his most immediate revolutionary neighbor, Modibo Keita, who was deposed in a military coup in November 19 of 1968.

Then I received a disquieting letter from one whom I trusted and respected. Starting out the expression "Plus il y a change has always been the rule here in dreamland," he was talking about Guinea. "But this time I have a feeling ce ne plus exactement la meme chose." For six months we'd averaged about three mass meetings a week. Almost daily section meetings plus numerous marches and manifestations of loyalty for the President and, of course, national conferences of Jeunesse, Femme, CNR, and the CNT. At all these meetings the patron, which means, of course, the President, was eulogized with constant repetition of his new titles, "Responsable Supreme de la Revolution" and "Serviteur Fidele du Peuple". You must admit that they are modest and more modest terms than the "Redeemer." Furthermore, he also spoke at length at each meeting. Of course, during this period almost no productive work was performed anywhere in Guinea except at Fria, which probably didn't matter too much since the economy ceased to exist some time ago. The strategy was obvious: He was going to keep everybody so damn busy and distracted, no one would have the time to plot a coup. And one of the distractions was a gem of fantasy. Border guards were doubled; all security forces were alerted to be on the lookout for French paratroops disguised as Americans looking for jobs with Fria.



Well, it worked, if, as I assume is possible, Colonel Diaby and others decided it was time to stop all that nonsense. If that's what they decided, they sure botched it. The tragedy is that the thirteen condemned to death, plus the twenty to thirty put in prison, were among the most competent people we all knew in the former group in addition to Diaby and six other militaires, Fodeba Keita, Diawadou Barry, Karim Fofana Jilus, in absentia, Naby Youlah, and Mamadou Bah. This was bringing it pretty close to home. I don't think any of them had been as yet executed.

Then too, the Patron has used the alleged "complot" to get rid of anyone who might be a threat or isn't one hundred percent militant. This includes people like Balla Camara, Doctor Marega, Baidi Goeye and Diop. "The second ranking Guinean at Fria, Karim Bangoura, was scared to death but was still functioning as Minister of Transport. The case of Achkar Marof is still a complete mystery. As you know, he was snatched off the aircraft on returning from New York City and put in prison. There was talk of his absconding with proceeds of the sale of the Embassy at 73rd Street, but his wife, who was housed by Fodeba Keita, swears she has all the deposit slips countersigned by Beavogui. I suspect Marof ran into the same trouble as Telli Diallo. Because of the U.N. forum, he acquired an international reputation and there is only room for one Guinean on the international scene. Then too, he made the great mistake of not showing much enthusiasm for returning home."

"So here we are again, Russians, Czechs, Yugoslavs, French, Americans, everyone except the Chinese, pariahs once more."

Now, if that letter sounds like an exaggeration, I would like to just call attention to a letter I received from the Secretary of State who at that time was William Rogers, with the date of February 23, 1971. The letter might be self-explanatory. "Dear Dr. Morrow, President Nixon has asked that I reply to your telegram of January 25, 1971 urging him to request President Sekou Toure to grant clemency to those condemned to death by the Guinean revolutionary tribunal and to ensure the right of appeal to condemned as well as those sentenced to hard labor."

"We have followed the recent events in Guinea closely, sharing the concern that has been expressed around the world. We have felt, however, that to the extent outside world appeals might be effective in the present circumstances, they would more properly come from African nations and from other countries whose nationals might be involved. Appeals were directed to President Sekou Toure by Pope Paul, the President of Germany and several African leaders. As one of the few Western nations still having effective relations with Guinea, we gave help and advice where we could. We appreciate your concerning interests in matters of this kind and that you conveyed your views to the President."



A letter dated April 25, 1977. "On the assumptions that all of you are willing to try something to get our many friends out of jail, I submit the following very hurriedly drafted telegram to be sent. Since the ROA anniversary comes early in March and May, time is of the essence, so please call me with any suggested revisions. Once we agree on the English version, I hope that it can be put into proper French. I assume that you all recognize my reference to a long struggle for justice and so forth to be rhetorical. S. E. Ahmed, Sekou Toure, Conakry, Guinea. We the undersigned, former U.S. ambassadors to Guinea and Assistant Secretary of State to Africa, long-time friends of your country and the people of Guinea recalling your long struggle for justice and the rights of man, do urge you to consider an amnesty for those still in prison that they may return to their families. We suggest that such an action would be a welcome gesture in celebration of the 30th anniversary of the ROA. John Morrow, William Attwood, James Loeb, Robinson McIlvaine, Joseph Palmer."

The sequel was a document presented to the United Nations by the International Day for Human Rights, a 300-page document - still I believe the date 1977. The document concerned widespread illegal arrests, torture, starvation, murder of political prisoners under President Sekou Toure's regime. The report was signed by four former United States ambassadors to Guinea, including William Attwood, publisher of Newsday.

Not wishing to close on this tragic note, just a few observations about Africa. Let's not forget that the United States national policy has been to promote the self-determination of people. We are reminded often that America may be considered the original anti-colonial people, and this country has been in the vanguard for at least a half century in helping people achieve their national independence. It is very easy to forget that Africa and colonialism, with its race and class discrimination, made Africans keenly aware that they were objects of inferiority. Many of today's African leaders are considered hypersensitive and appear to be quick to point out slights due to discrimination. Some of these leaders have been very suspicious of the West and the motives of Western powers. Catapulted from second-class status to new positions of power, not always certain of their new role, some leaders have reacted aggressively. In fact, Westerners have gone so far as to accuse the Africans of being overly arrogant because they seem to wear their newly won mantle of freedom in such a highly assertive fashion. These people don't understand the African's position. They explain much of the loud noises and boasting heard in Africa or in the halls of the United Nations have been merely a symptom of the uncertainty and inexperience in the ways of high-level, high-pressured, high-powered diplomacy on the part of certain officials. With this in mind, they might say that one might better understand the shouting of Tshombe - of a Tshombe who never had a real chance of succeeding in his secession effort. This might help to account for the actions of Jaja Wachuku of Nigeria, one-time self-styled spokesman of the African bloc, who would attack U.S. representative Adlai Stevenson one day and demand from the West the very next day unquestioning support for a seat for Africa on the Security Council, and Economic and Social Councils, two of the most important organs of the United Nations.



Never think for a moment that these leaders were not fully conscious of their power, power derived not only from the fact that they were in control at last of their destiny and had the strong backing of their constituency, but also because of the strategic position vis-a-vis the East and the West. This sense of power or the desire for power helped to promote a feeling of rivalry among some African leaders, not only within the continent itself, but also within the United Nations.

President Toure of Guinea and Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana may have talked about the Pan-Africanism and they may have discussed with President Modibo Keita of Mali a Ghana-Guinea-Mali union, but I'll wager that in the mind of each one was the question, who ultimately was going to be recognized as a real leader of any such formation? Anyone who has lived in Africa has had the opportunity to witness how violently upon the emotions of his faithful followers a leader can play, with the intent of accentuating hero worship. A leader expects the shouts and adulation of the crowd even though he may make a show of dismissing such plaudits with a mere glance or languid wave of the hand. President Toure, like our present-day opera star, Pavarotti, used to keep a white handkerchief available to acknowledge supporters.

A certain American anthropologist advanced the view that African leadership views the non-literate millions as children, who should be led in a political movement directed and controlled much as one would look after growing children. This is indeed a questionable theory. Whatever the case may be, some of these leaders do consider themselves as the emancipators of their people from colonialism. They feel that they are the guides to a better life. They are looked upon as the fathers and protectors of their people; they act as spokesmen to the rest of the world. The Sekou Toures, the Nkrumahs should not cause us to overlook a Leopold Senghor, recently retired president of Senegal, an intellectual, former professor, poet, philosopher, who expressed his concept of nationalism with noble calm. He should not make us forget the Houphouet-Boigny, able president of the Ivory Coast and former Cabinet member of President de Gaulle's Government, and Hamani Diori, former president of Niger and former important official in the Assembly Nationale, who was put out of office by a coup.

President Tubman of Liberia was looked upon by some of the young African leaders as an elder statesman of Africa. In latter years, President Tubman attempted to place his best representatives in the United Nations, in Washington, and in other strategic and difficult posts. In 1961, for example, one of his most able men was a Liberian Ambassador to America, the Honorable S. Edward Peal, with whom it was my privilege to work in Guinea. Ambassador Peal was greatly respected by all members of the diplomatic corps in Guinea for his ability and sincerity. It is my understanding that he occupied a similar position of esteem in Washington in the diplomatic corps.



President Toure never hesitated to play upon the emotions of the crowd. He made certain, however, to maintain rigid order and strict party discipline. Nkrumah made no effort to dissipate the God myth spread by his followers throughout Ghana. However, the repeated assassination bomb attempts and Nkrumah's reluctance to make public appearances later brought into question that so-called god-like power of this leader, who was removed from office in 1966 during his absence on a trip to China.

Whatever you think and whatever you may want to think about the current crop of African leaders in Africa or in the United Nations, it cannot be denied that these men have introduced a new era. Some of them are going to develop into eminent statesmen. There may be in their ranks at different moments some fools, some demagogues, some fanatics. But let us admit it: similar individuals have appeared already elsewhere on the pages of history. By and large, these men today are helping Africa find its place in the new horizon.

It is my sincere hope, from this time on, it will be possible to find in the ranks of the United States Foreign Service dedicated black men and women who are devoting their lives to the diplomatic service of the United States. This is not to overlook the need for trained personnel in our government, our Peace Corps, in the United Nations, as well as in other international agencies. The problems and issues on the international front reach into the very roots of our national life and constitute a sweeping challenge for us all. I still firmly believe that it is possible for America to contribute to the image of willingness to try to understand and to be of genuine assistance to all people who are striving to help themselves in the difficult struggle against poverty, disease, inertia, illiteracy, and despair. Some while back, I said if there were time, I would give a footnote on the United Nations. Now, do you think that would be...?

Q: Would you like to do it tonight?

MORROW: Yes.

Q: Yes, Dr. Morrow, could you talk now, please, about the time you spent as an alternate delegate to the United Nations?

MORROW: Well, why don't I take you behind the scenes at the United Nations, as to give some idea of what it meant to work with the late elder statesman and diplomat, Ambassador Adlai Stevenson. It's not being done with any intention of trying to add to the Stevenson lore, for much has been written and said already about this nationally- and internationally-respected leader, who really preferred to be called Governor rather than Ambassador. It's merely a matter of presenting the observation of one who was on the scene at a particular moment in history.



To the surprise and possibly the dismay of those interested primarily in patronage, on March 1, 1961, I was called from my post in Guinea in West Africa, to which I had been sent by the Eisenhower Administration in 1959, and requested by the newly-installed Kennedy Administration to report for duty at the United Nations on March 7, 1961 as an alternate delegate with the rank of ambassador. The Senate had to vote on this appointment by President Kennedy and therefore I had to appear before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee under the chairmanship of Senator William Fulbright of Arkansas, on March 6, 1961. In a hearing opened to the public and to the press, I was asked many searching questions concerning the Guinean situation and the American position there vis-a-vis the Communist bloc nations striving to make Guinea their showplace. At the conclusion of the hearing, my appointment was approved by the members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee meeting in Executive session and then was voted and approved by the full Senate convened at noon that day, the vote of the Senate duly authorizing my reporting for duty the next day, Tuesday, March 7th, at the United States Mission at the United Nations, located in an office building on Park Avenue, New York.

A seat had been reserved for me at the staff meeting which placed me between Mrs. Marietta Tree, who handled human rights, and the late Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt, who sat for the Mission in the General Assembly. These two charming and knowledgeable ladies were extremely helpful in orienting me into the ways and intricacies of the United Nations. And I was greatly indebted to them both for aiding me in my liaison work with Europeans, Africans, and Asians.

Thus, it was that I entered upon a very challenging, rigorous, and stimulating tour of duty under the skillful guidance of Adlai Stevenson, who led us through a hectic session marked by heated debates in the General Assembly over U.N. policy in the Congo. There were frequent attempts by the Soviet delegation to harass Secretary General Dag Hammarskjöld by interjecting the Troika Proposition. The March meeting of the Security Council was called because of a resolution calling for investigation of the suppression of riots in Angola by Portugal and the famous April confrontation involving Ambassador Stevenson and Cuban Foreign Minister, Raoul Raoul, over the ill-fated Bay of Pigs invasion.

I never worked with anybody who could accomplish so much in a comparatively brief time allotted to daily staff meetings as Ambassador Stevenson. Yet all of us who were delegates, or alternates - there were five delegates and three alternates - had adequate and ever-present opportunities to express our opinion or offer suggestions. I soon realized that Stevenson, with his dry deprecatory wit, was not the kind of leader who drove people; he drove himself, and by his example caused the rest of us to give only our best. No matter how difficult or seemingly impossible the task you might be assigned, it was cheerfully accepted, and most important of all, carried out.



I found it to be a tremendously inspiring opportunity to work with a statesman of such boundless energy and enthusiasm who did not count the hours of days spent in trying to make this a better world in which to live. I used to wonder, however, when I saw Stevenson in action at the U.S. Mission and the Security Council, the General Assembly, or just carrying through his heavy daily schedules, just how long he could keep up such a pace. I knew that we were born in the same month, on the same day, but with ten years difference in age. And when I asked him one day in April 1961, after a session in the U.N. political committee, how he kept going at such a pace, he answered, smilingly, that he was just an old, hard-bitten politician who had grown accustomed to such a tempo.

Nothing that occurred during this 1961 session of the United Nations equaled the drama, suspense, excitement of the March meeting of the Security Council and the April confrontation of Stevenson and Raoul, mentioned above. I shall never forget the utterly surprised and shocked expression on the face of the representative to Portugal when Stevenson, asserting that Portugal should accelerate immediately its step-by-step planning within its territory, for only through such planning could advancement be made toward full self-determination by those under Portuguese administration. Here was a spokesman for the United States taking his stark position diametrically opposing those of its allies.

Those listening that day interpreted Stevenson's speech as a positive indication of a change in American policy fostered by the Kennedy Administration. Here was the United States reaffirming through its U.N. spokesman, its belief in freedom and self-determination for all people. This placed the United States in the position of taking the side of the African and Asian nations on this issue. It was indeed for me a strange spectacle to see the United States and Russia voting on the same side of a question with the three nations, Liberia, Ceylon and the United Arab Republic, that had sponsored a resolution calling for the U.N. investigation of suppression by Portugal or riots in Angola. Surely Stevenson was in his best form as he presented the U.S. position that day.

For days after this, the U.S. vote, in the Security Council that is, the corridors at the United Nations were filled with delegates discussing the words of Stevenson which, according to the representative of Liberia, would reverberate throughout Africa.

In sharp contrast to this was the anguish and anger which those of us in the U.S. Mission experienced when we discovered that Ambassador Stevenson had been allowed to present faulty information in his April 12th reply to the charges of the Cuban Prime Minister that Cuba had been the victim of outside aggression in the attack on the Bay of Pigs and that the responsibility for this attack belonged wholly to the United States. The Cuban Prime Minister's theatrical and almost historical presentation followed the report that two B26 bombers, flown by defecting Cuban pilots, had landed in Florida after inflicting damage in Cuba.



Amidst the excitement and the tension created by the harsh words of Raoul, Stevenson made his reply based upon information and photographs supplied to him by Washington. Stevenson displayed the blown-up photographs of one of the planes to support the contention that the plane belonged to the Cuban air force. He asserted that the air force pilots defecting from Castro's tyranny had escaped to Florida. He declared that no U.S. personnel or U.S. Government planes had participated in the alleged raid. Stevenson concluded with a statement made previously by President Kennedy to the effect that the issue was between the Cubans themselves and not between Cuba and the United States.

Not until after we heard Stevenson publicly make his eloquent statement to refute the Cuban charges did the truth begin to leak out about the planes, the true identify of the pilots, the supposed U.S. involvement through activities of agents working outside of conventional Government lines. I saw a somewhat chastened but dimly dogged Stevenson confront the Cuban Prime Minister once again on April 17, 1961, to reply in solemn dignity to the Cuban complaint. Stevenson reminded the U.N. delegates that many Americans had sympathized with the cause espoused by Castro three years before and had given hospitality to the Castro followers against Batista's tyranny, but, added Stevenson, these Americans could not be expected to look with less sympathy on the Cuban struggle against Castro's tyranny. In Stevenson's own words: "We sympathize with the desire of the people of Cuba, including those in exile, who do not stop being Cubans merely because they can no longer stand to live in today's Cuba. We sympathize with their desire to seek Cuban independence and freedom. We hope that Cuban people will succeed in doing what Castro's revolution never really tried to do, that is to bring domestic processes to Cuba. As President Kennedy has already said, there will not, under any condition, be an intervention in Cuba by the United States armed forces."

I was very conscious that April day, as I listened to Stevenson, that his voice lacked the accustomed ring of conviction. Not even this eloquence could remove the doubt lingering in the minds of many listeners because of the previous U.S. presentation of erroneous information. Nothing Stevenson could do then or later seemed to overcome the psychological advantage of the Cuban Prime Minister's theme, repeated over and over again, that the U.S. Government had exported war to Cuba.

I wondered why the Kennedy Administration allowed Stevenson to damage his heretofore unquestionable credibility by repeating a false cover story to the delegates of the U.N. political committee. I knew Stevenson always considered Washington and consulted Washington before important presentations, to check up on last-minute changes in the text. I rejected, therefore, any lame excuses about a possible breakdown in communication between New York and Washington. I believe sincerely that Stevenson had acted in good faith and without prior knowledge that the data supplied him was faulty. I thought he would resign to make clear to the world his feelings about the role he had then been forced, unwillingly, to play.



His failure to resign posed ... caused a difficult problem for those of us at the U.S. Mission who considered this step, for the resignation of a member of the Mission under such circumstances could have been interpreted as a lack of confidence in and repudiation of the man, Stevenson. By remaining, the Governor gained additional time for the U.S. Government to prepare for the crises that loomed ahead, I don't know. History may one day offer the answer.

Q: Thank you, Dr. Morrow.

MORROW: Thank you, Miss Tutt. (Laughter).

Q: It is now....

MORROW: Glad to get that off my chest.

Q: (Laughter). We'll raise some questions about that perhaps in tomorrow morning's session, if you like. It's about a quarter to ten, a very long day for you both, I know. (Laughter). Shall we end the session? (Laughter). Okay, thank you very much. It's a very full session, a very full day and you covered a great deal, I think.

Today is May 12, 1981. Dr. Morrow, last night when we were talking about President Toure's visit to America, you discussed that at great length. I understand there are some things you'd like to add.

MORROW: Thank you very much. I already indicated that I had to get to Washington before the trip started.

Q: Why?

MORROW: Well, I'd been scheduled to arrive in Washington several days ahead of the Guinean delegation to make sure that there were no loose ends to mar President Toure's official visit. And in the midst of last-minute preparations for the trip, I received word from Washington that an official from the International Cooperation Administration was to arrive in Conakry the next day to begin negotiations with Guinean authorities on the Standard Bilateral Agreement. For more than three and one-half months, despite repeated queries, we had remained in the dark concerning aid for Guinea. Now, four days before my departure date of October 18th, word had come of the imminent arrival of an aid official.



I knew the Guineans well enough to realize that they were going to be extremely suspicious about any effort to negotiate an agreement so close to their visit to America. They could easily believe that I had deliberately ... been deliberately deceptive in not letting them know in advance that my country contemplated approaching their government concerning an aid agreement. I was aware, too, that the officials with whom we had to deal were making their own preparations for the seven-nation tour with President Toure. I thought that the timing of the arrival of the Washington official was extremely bad.

The official arrived the next day and we spent the morning going over details of the agreement which I was to present to President Toure that afternoon. I stated very emphatically my objections to the timing and the purpose to his visit. After reading through the statement, which I was seeing for the first time, I warned that the Guineans were not going to be willing to sign it.

The official felt that I was unduly pessimistic and said that the favorable atmosphere surrounding the Toure visit to America ensured the success of these negotiations. I replied that President Toure was willing to be more interested in learning whether the United States was supplying a plane to transport the Guinean delegation to Washington than in discussing the details of an agreement at this time. I assured the official that nobody wanted to have an effective working agreement with the Guinean Government more than I did and I pledged to do my utmost to achieve one, despite my misgivings.

The ICA official, my acting deputy, and I met with President Toure at the Presidential residence that afternoon. After presenting my colleagues, I thanked the President for receiving us at such a short notice. I outlined the nature of the proposed bilateral agreement and succeeded in getting Toure to agree to appoint a working party to explore details. I requested a meeting the next day, Saturday, since my departure was scheduled for Sunday. Toure indicated that the ministers participating in the meeting would not be available until Monday. He concluded the interview in his usual fashion by saying, "d'accord en principe," which meant simply that he had heard our propositions and the interview had come to an end.

The ICA official seemed very elated as we left the President's office and when we reached the chancery, he wanted to send word to Washington that Toure had agreed in principle to the terms of the agreement. I told him that I could not sign such a message because it would give Washington the wrong impression. He reminded me that Toure had said "d'accord en principe." I said that the Guinean President used this expression frequently in his conversations with his ministers and with members of the diplomatic corps and that it was merely a polite acknowledgment that the President had been listening. Toure would not state any opinion on an agreement until it had been examined carefully by his advisors. I also ventured to say that the moment Toure's advisors read the clause pertaining to certain privileges for technicians, they would reject the whole agreement.



It was fortunate that the original message which the ICA official wanted to send to his agency never left the chancery. Negotiations started on Monday, October 19, 1959, came abruptly to a halt the following day when Guinean officials made it clear that their Government would accept no agreement which encroached upon their national sovereignty. They declared that they had granted no special privilege to the Russians, Czechoslovakians, or Polish technicians and they had no intention of extending special privileges to American technicians. The American official was very much upset over the Guinean Government.

When the word came through in Washington about the breakdown in negotiations in Conakry I was not the least bit surprised. I was called into a hastily arranged meeting with State Department and ICA officials. An ICA man told me that I would have to return to Guinea and educate the Guineans on the ways of doing business with the United States. I asked him to suggest specifically how one educated the officials of a foreign country who charged that the insistence upon special privileges for non-diplomatic personnel encroached on their national sovereignty and felt that any pressure tactics constituted an insult to African dignity. The official in question, who up to this point had been quite vociferous and somewhat arrogant in tone and bearing, became silent.

I left that meeting and I left Washington with a feeling of deep frustration and bewilderment at the attitude of some of the officials in the International Cooperation Administration toward Guinea in particular and Africa in general. Among other things, I had detected an attitude that seemed to be: "Guinea will either sign this agreement or else!" I got the impression that these officials did not particularly care whether Guinea received aid or not. There seemed to be a complete unawareness of the ferment on the African scene and of the fact that all Asia, as well as Africa, was scrutinizing the United States-Guinean relationship to discover whether the United States had placed a new priority on Africa and at last was formulating policies that were responsive to African realities.

To be perfectly frank about it, during my entire tour of duty in Guinea, I encountered only five ICA men who showed the understanding, technical expertise and empathy absolutely essential for dealing with the oftentimes sensitive officials of developing nations. I can remember the names of four of these men: Jack Hood Vaughn, Marc Gordon, Bill Freeman, and John Canning. Unfortunately, I cannot recall the name of the fifth, but I do remember that he spoke with a foreign accent and was quite perceptive.



Jack Vaughn, who later left ICA - the best thing he could ever have done - to go back to the Peace Corps, and later became Ambassador to Panama, Assistant Secretary of State for Indian-American Affairs, and Director of the Peace Corps, was particularly effective during his visit to Guinea, even though the Guineans did not sign the agreement at that time. It was always my regret that the ICA was unwilling to give Vaughn the rank or authority to exercise his good judgment in negotiations with the Guineans. With the necessary authorization from Washington, which we could not get, and with Vaughn and myself working as a team, I believe we could have broken that particular aid impasse many months earlier.

I do not wish to convey the impression that I felt bitter toward the ICA. I was well aware that there were others within its ranks during the period in question who realized how important it was to prove to emerging African nations the validity of the often-expressed U.S. commitment to help them develop economically and politically while maintaining their sovereignty. Unfortunately, these knowledgeable individuals lacked the authority to put their ideas into action. Certainly the attempt to secure American technicians for countries like Guinea was a very ticklish and difficult matter. Those who had the desired skill and a speaking knowledge of French were usually reluctant to leave the United States to serve overseas for a twelve- or twenty-four month period. Furthermore, the conditions under which they might have to work and live in some areas raised questions about health hazards as well as creature comforts.

I can well understand why the ICA felt obliged to seek the very best possible conditions, including diplomatic immunities, for all its personnel. It is a fact, however, that other Americans not under ICA jurisdiction were recruited to work directly for the Guinean Government by the African-American Institute. The vast differences in pay and perquisites created an unfortunate atmosphere among those Americans and others living under better conditions. Those who experienced difficulties in getting promised compensation or housing, or who ran afoul of customs because of an unwillingness to pay unexpected duties, were not in the best frame of mind to perform their assigned task.

A Guinean official at the Education Ministry summed up the situation by saying that the only people who complained constantly about their working conditions were the Americans. He contrasted their attitude with that of the Russians, Czechoslovakians and East Germans, who supposedly accepted, without question, the conditions in struggling Guinea. What this official ignored or did not wish to acknowledge was that the Soviet, Czechoslovakian and East German technicians had to carry out orders that came from above. American technicians were free to stay or leave, and several did leave without giving notice.



Fortunately for our standing abroad, the Peace Corps later proved conclusively that Americans could go into any country in the world without deep freezers, rugs, and other outward signs of modern civilization and perform as effectively as people from any other country. Peace Corps members did much to remove the idea that Americans always clamor for special privileges and complain about the disgracefully low level of foreign culture and civilization. In fact, the excellent volunteer group of students known as Operation Crossroads, sponsored by Rev. James Robinson of New York and chaperoned in Guinea in the summer of 1960 by the Rev. William Coffin, Yale University chaplain, really paved the way for the Peace Corps in Africa.

I did wonder at times, however, what agency actually exerted the most influence on the foreign policy of the United States. It often appeared to me that the ICA, responsible for the outlay of huge sums throughout the world, was making the State Department play second fiddle in decision making. This might not have been true of American dealings elsewhere in the world, but it seemed to be the case, at least as long as I was in Guinea.

And to digress for just a moment, I mentioned Rev. Robinson's group and the fact that Rev. William Coffin was the chaperone or the guidance counselor, if you will, during that period in Guinea. I must say that Bill Coffin did a most effective job in gaining rapport between the Guineans and his group. And not only Coffin; there was a young lady, Marie Gadsden, who came to teach English, who also did an excellent job in establishing rapport as well as teaching English to the Guineans and others who were interested in trying to learn that language. And the pity is that we couldn't have had more Bill Coffins, and more Marie Gadsdens coming into a situation as difficult as the Guinean situation was.

Q: How long did they stay there?

MORROW: The Peace Corps was there for the summer and Dr. Gadsden had a somewhat extended stay in Guinea. And the interesting thing about it is at first there was great suspicion about this group that had come there to work, not to study, but to work. And the Guineans probably placed their most astute, shall we say, individuals among this group and discovered that some of those youngsters didn't even seem to know too much about even United States politics and the American Government. And when they discovered that they felt more at ease because they decided, well, these folks are here on the level; they are not here to spy and there was excellent rapport between the Guinean youth and the American youth.

It was a mixed group, but predominantly a white group. There were some American blacks in the group and they certainly did an excellent job in proving to the Guineans that there were some genuine Americans who really were concerned and really wanted to help. Thank God they showed up at that time in history.



Q: What kind of work did they do?

MORROW: The work consisted of trying to help construct schools. As a matter of fact, it was all sort of laboring work, the same type of thing that I did when I went to France in the summer of 1947 and went down to a place called Chambon to help dig ditches for a foundation for what was to be a schoolhouse and also for surrounding buildings. These people were actually doing laboring work, manual labor, anything which was necessary for the cause. It was most interesting to see them. By and large college students, and some, I'm sure, who had never done any strenuous kind of work before nevertheless threw themselves into this activity.

Q: Did they live with the people of the country?

MORROW: ...Yes.

Q: ...in the private homes?

MORROW: ... in the areas, that's correct as I understand it.

Q: In the private homes.

MORROW: That's what I understand. Not like always in a little group or cluster, which is the good old American way.

Q: ...uhum...

MORROW: Shocked the Guineans completely, completely ... and they ate the food and whatever.

Q: And that was the forerunner of the Peace Corps?

MORROW: In my estimation, the success that Coffin and Rev. Robinson had in this venture in Guinea, sold the bill of goods to the people of the United States who felt it never would work. When I heard about it, I got very excited and because I had such great respect for Rev. Robinson, having known him before I ever went to Africa, I definitely wanted to give this group a chance. But there were some people back in Washington who had great misgivings about what might happen to the group, with its dire consequences.



Q: What were the speculations about it?

MORROW: Well, first their speculation was that they would only be there two or three days and be thrown out ... But that didn't happen to them (laughs). But I should mention at this point it did happen several years later in connection with a Peace Corps group, but by then, as I've indicated previously, the conditions had changed, altered greatly.

And then they felt some might suffer injury; some people have very odd ideas about Africa. I had mentioned it before, but I can recall a man in one of the banks in New Jersey, I won't mention the name of the bank or the man, who vehemently suggested to me that under no circumstances should I take my family with me to Guinea. And yet by having taken my family, that was the thing that gave the Guineans confidence that, gee, these people must be on the level; they're all here in a group. I'm not saying, you know, the myth about wild animals, I never saw any stalking around in (laughs) ... in throughout the terrain of Guinea.

Q: That group of Peace Corps workers that were thrown out...

MORROW: That's, that's after my ... after I was there. And the circumstances, of course, were extremely difficult at that point, because it seems that a plane bearing some Guinean officials had been stopped in Ghana and they had been taken off, literally seized, and the accusation was that the United States was behind this and that's the reason why McIlvaine was arrested. I just mentioned merely at one point that he had been arrested - I forgot the date I gave you - and was released about twenty-four hours later after strenuous negotiations with Washington.

The truth is that the Guineans felt that the Americans had something to do with a plot which embarrassed their officials, and, actually, nobody knew anything about it. McIlvaine was a new person arriving on the scene and he was the victim of circumstances.

The situation at the house - I didn't go into detail - was quite a scary one for his wife and children, however, because they were out there alone in Guinea, since McIlvaine was under arrest, when this mob descended on the Residence where we had once lived. But one difference is that after we had departed they had put a second floor on, so it was a much larger Residence. And, fortunately, some militia people and the cook and several other folks were able to keep the mob from doing injury to Mrs. McIlvaine and her children; otherwise, that would have been a very tragic situation.



When we were there, there was never any indication of that. Several of the residences were broken in and pilfered; nobody ever touched our residence. It wasn't because we could say we had wonderful guardians, because the guards on duty had no bullets for their rifles and they asked me would I please go and ask the President or go over to the camp to get them some bullets. I actually made the trip but I wasn't successful in getting them.

I will say that our guardian had a machete, a very trusty weapon, and I discovered that when I had to make this trip from Africa to the United States, and left my wife and children there, this guardian put a cot at the gate and slept there every night with his machete. This is what I was told by the soldiers when I came back. Two soldiers were on guard but the guardian decided that his presence was very necessary, and I thought that was extremely loyal ... loyal service on the part of an individual.

Q: I agree. Is there anything else you'd like to add?

MORROW: Maybe a point or so about the agreements, as I have brought it up that the negotiations had broken down. Whatever may be said to the contrary, the Guinean Government remained unwilling to sign the standard ICA agreement, in the form originally presented in the fall of 1959.

Q: What form was it in? Was that the one presented originally...?

MORROW: Originally, yes, asking for all of the special treatment - technicians. The document signed finally by the Minister of Plan, Keita, and myself in Conakry on September 30, 1960, was the outgrowth of prolonged and frustrating negotiations in Washington as well as in Conakry. The signing ceremony was witnessed by Guinean reporters and one French reporter and photographer. A release concerning the agreement appeared in the Agence Guinéenne de Presse but no publicity was given it in America until an enterprising reporter of the New York Times, Dana Adam Schmidt, got word of it a month or so later. And as a result of his prodding, a spokesman for the State Department ICA admitted that a bilateral agreement had been signed.

Q: Why do you think this?



MORROW: I never did understand this reluctance to admit that the agreement had finally been concluded, and the reluctance probably lay in the fact that they had to water down the section on special privileges for technicians and come across with an agreement which much more resembled a very sensible agreement that the British had always had in operation in Guinea and had thus been successful without all of this frustration. I think that there was anger and pique and embarrassment on the part of ICA that they had lost the battle, and a feeling that the blacks, and when I say the blacks I'm talking about the Ambassador from America as well as the Guineans, had won the battle.

The bilateral agreement was considered very significant by members of the diplomatic corps in Guinea, who had come to believe that the United States and Guinea would never reach a meeting of minds. It was considered so significant by the Soviet Union that it called Ambassador Solod home two days later. When the Soviet Ambassador returned to Guinea, it was announced that Soviet engineers were to arrive soon to begin work on the railroad connecting Conakry and Kankan. The Soviet authorities did not know, but I had reason to believe that the agreement between Guinea and the United States would not be implemented during my remaining months of tour of duty in Guinea, and it wasn't. I had hoped that the United States was going to assist in the construction of the Konkourï½ Dam, not because I wanted Toure to have a prestige project, but because I felt that such a dam was necessary for the further development of industry in Guinea. I felt that Toure was as good a risk as Kwame Nkrumah any day and he was much more forthright. Nkrumah had received American aid for his Volta Dam project and any hope that Toure might have had to strengthen the possibility of American support for the construction of a dam on the Konkourï½ River to provide electric power, a project already seriously considered by the French, was not realized.

I was frequently asked by visitors in Guinea, official or non-official, what was wrong with relations between the United States and Guinea. I could have answered this question merely by stating that it was invariably a long drawn out process to establish good relations between two such different nations. This would have been dodging the issue. It was closer to the truth when I replied that Africa had not been on the U.S. priority list until fairly recently. I felt that the awareness in U.S. governmental circles of the situation developing in Africa had come as much from development in the United Nations as from reports from African capitals, reports which all too frequently were ignored or were acted upon too late.

In the United Nations there had been a marked increase during 1960ï½1961 in the number of African nations that had become member states. The articulate delegates from Africa insisted that powerful nations belonging to the United Nations support rather than thwart the role of the U.N. in aiding ... Africa's revolution to achieve success, in as peaceful and just a manner as possible. The United States was finding it increasingly difficult to secure the support of African and Asian nations for U.N. measures in which it was particularly interested. But nobody seemed to be connecting development at the United Nations with United Nations policy.



I just mentioned in passing having gone from Guinea to the United Nations; what I did not say was that just shortly prior to my arriving there, there had been an uprising in the Security Council on the part of the Black Panthers of New York that had quite frightened the Security Council. When I arrived there and assessed the situation, at one time I let Stevenson and some of his colleagues know that I had been sent there probably to keep the peace. I assured them that there'd be no further uprisings during the time that I was at the U.N. They looked at me quizzically and I said, "You forget that when President Toure came to America he visited New York and made a talk to the people of New York, and that meeting was disturbed because of the fact that a member of the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People) got up to try to make a speech and was booed down, and the Guinean delegates at first thought that this was some kind of show against their President. And I reassured them, no, this was an American way of showing displeasure of something.

The point I want to make is, though, that Toure and his group were predominantly Muslims and they decided that anybody who had association with Toure must be all right. And since I had spent almost two years (laugh) in Guinea and then had been immediately brought by Kennedy, of another political party, to the U.N., it was to save Stevenson and his group. So this was, of course, said in a joking fashion. But then nobody ever bothered us the whole time that I was out there. There were no disturbances on the part of the people from Harlem in trying to break up proceedings in the United Nations. So there might have been more truth in this than met the eye.

Q: I think you're right. (Laughter). Shall we talk about your early life now?

MORROW: Oh ...(suspiciously), that's way in the past.

Q: That's all right. (Laughs). Could we back up and really start with Hackensack, New Jersey where you were born?

MORROW: Ah...

Q: Come forward.



MORROW: Hackensack was a little town across the river from New York and people used to always laugh when they heard the name. As a matter of fact, it used to be heard on the vaudeville stage in the olden days. Hackensack and Hoboken; these were always causes for laughter. I can recall one time in high school making a statement to a chap, Earl Miers, who later became one of the directors at Rutgers Press: "Earl, let's put this damn town on the map some day." This was just a joke in high school, but to double back. The interesting thing about Hackensack was that it had an excellent school system. At that time, a grammar school and high school, and a number of the teachers in both of these schools had come from New England. They were dedicated individuals, well trained in their various studies.

Q: You were born in Hackensack?

MORROW: I was born in Hackensack and way back, February 5, 1910. The interesting thing is the fact that neither my dad nor mother went to college. They had come originally from the South; my mother originally from Virginia, my father originally from North Carolina. His father was a Presbyterian minister and was trained by the Presbyterian Church. My dad did not wish to be a Presbyterian minister, so he had left home early. If he'd stayed, he probably could have been educated in the same fashion as his own father.

Be that as it may, both parents had a great respect for education and in some miraculous fashion they were able to instill that in the five children of the family. There were two older brothers, older than I: one, of course, now deceased; a sister older than I; and a brother younger than myself.

I think one of the outstanding events in my life, and I have to mention it at this point, came around 1923 when my sister applied to teach in the Hackensack school system. She'd gone to Montclair State Normal School and later on went on to Columbia to get her master's degree. But for a black person to apply, and at that point in time, in a town like Hackensack, created a great deal of difficulty.

To be frank about it, the Ku Klux Klan even burned a cross in our backyard in response to someone's trying to break into "our" school system. Also, strangely enough, among the black folks in Hackensack, there were people who felt that the Morrows were kind of getting out of their place, if there is such a thing in quotation marks as a "place". I won't go into the long drawn out negotiations, but my sister did finally get a job in Hackensack.

Q: Tell us a little about how she did it.



MORROW: In the beginning, to discourage her... well, what I should say was, strangely enough, she had done her practice teaching in Hackensack earlier in a school called Broadway School down in the predominantly Italian population. Nobody paid any particular attention to the fact that there was a black girl teaching in Union Street School, during her period of practice work for Montclair State Normal School. But as soon as an application for a job got into the picture, the newspapers added that New York reporters of the New York Times were appearing on the scene, the Herald Tribune, in this little town to find out who were these folks who lived in that little house on Berry Street who are trying to break the color line. What were their objectives? What was behind it? My father's and mother's quiet feelings were that the young woman is qualified; she's a product of this school system, all right.

At first, they tried to put her in a building which was next to, adjacent to State Street School, and I don't remember all the details, whether they had all black students in there or whether they had a mixture of blacks, Hispanics and Italians. I know there were no students from off the hill, what we call off the hill where the rich ... not in her first classes. Now this was supposed to discourage this young woman and somebody would say, you see, you are setting up a black discriminatory policy by this because you want a job.

Fortunately, there was a man by the name of Stark, who originally had come from New England. Stark felt that my dad was correct in trying to get a job for his daughter, who had excellent marks throughout the Hackensack high school system and throughout normal school. And he backed her to the hilt. To make a long story short, she got broken into the system and a point had come where she would be able to move without always having any kind of stigma involved, but this was a slow process. And I can recall being in an English class in Hackensack High School as a sophomore and the teacher prefacing the class with a remark, which wasn't relevant to the lesson whatsoever, by saying, "It's a pity that there are always some people who are trying to get in where they don't belong." And even though I was young and dumb, I sort of felt it must have something to do with me or with somebody in my family.

Now, the strange thing about this system in Hackensack did not have a segregated school system - but strangely enough, as I went through school I would always be the only black in the class. I was the only black in Hackensack High School in the academic division, which meant you were preparing for college. I think the same thing was true of my brother, E. Frederick, who preceded me, and who, incidentally, had been one who really made the record wherever he went ... was an organizer for the NAACP, took all the chances when he was in the army to help integrate and, of course, got into a great deal of difficulty by trying to integrate the segregated United States Army; then later on he became the first black to become an assistant to the President of the United States and eventually became a vice president for international affairs with the Bank of America.



Well, my brother and sister were really the people who showed the way. All I had to do, in theory, was to follow in the wake, which, of course, was very difficult because I was constantly being reminded, "Oh, you know your sister, Nellie;" "Oh, you know your brother, Frederick;" "Oh, you know your brother, Gene," who preceded all of us.

Now, in Hackensack High School there was a wonderful teacher by the name of Miss Bennett, God bless her soul, who was a mathematician. For some reason or another, Miss Bennett took an interest in me and I took an interest in mathematics. Maybe it was luck, or whatever it is, that I got excellent marks in mathematics throughout my high school career as well as excellent marks in languages: Latin and French. Miss Bennett is the one who convinced me to take the scholarship exams for Rutgers University, exams which were given over a period of, if I recall, two days in a town called Ridgewood. And I had to get on a bus for the first time and leave home and go all the way over to Ridgewood, which was the so-called rich section of New Jersey, to go in this high school alone to take exams for something that I couldn't understand what was the point in doing it. You see, at that time I had ideas, oh, how I would like to go to a place like Harvard. How could it ever possibly have been with the little bit of money that my dad made as a custodian at the public library in Hackensack?

I should mention that my dad was a Methodist minister. He had gotten his license but the church was so small he couldn't support a family on that and so he had to work. And that's important, because we came up with the concept that hard work was honorable, and strange enough, that was a saving grace.

Of course, I may be getting off the track, but through hard work, carrying ice, I was able to get enough money to help me with things like board at Rutgers University for the four years - because I had learned that you're supposed to work. I used to help my dad down at the library; helped cut the grass, which was a huge setup. And at that time we didn't have any machines with motors to it; you had to be the motor. That's how you could work. Work was honorable; nothing of disgrace in that, and that's very important.

Anyhow, to get back to Ridgewood, the Rutgers and State University used to give fifty scholarships to people throughout the state who could pass a rigorous two-day examination; all sorts of subjects. It's just like a college entrance examination. And I took this exam, because Miss Bennett insisted on it, and came away feeling, I'm never going to hear anything from this. Went on, got on my ice truck and one day when I came home for lunch my mother met me at the door and she was crying. Then it frightened me and I said, "What's the matter? What's the matter?" She said, "There's ... there's a letter here from Rutgers." I said, "Well, what is it? Well, open it; please open it." And I opened that letter and it said, "You have been awarded a four-year scholarship."



My mother really did cry. But the real impact of that was lost upon me at the time. And I realized that if that word had not come in that fashion, in that letter, because of the problem, financial problem of my family at that time, I don't know whether I ever would have been able to go on to college. For my brother, when he finally went to college, he first went to Lincoln and he changed to Bowdoin, and he would have to stop and work; work a half a year or sometimes work a full year; interrupt his college career in that fashion, struggling, and he hadn't even finished.

And it was difficult to think in terms, now here comes another person along that would have to be helped. Fortunately, this was as if God had given it to us, and I've always had that feeling. So by dint of hard working each summer and with that fellowship, it was possible for me to go to Rutgers. Let's get to Rutgers. I don't know if there's any interest in hearing about Rutgers.

Q: Yes.

MORROW: Well, this shows the influence of a family which felt that religion and a closeness of family were important. As a matter of fact, I can recall many years later when someone asked me, "Can you give any reason why you were able to move along in life?" I came up with a statement which I can mention now and then I'll very quickly go through this with Rutgers and Penn.

"Brought up in a period overshadowed by discrimination and depression, my life was influenced greatly by religious parents who had intrinsic faith in God, education, and the future possibility for advancement of all people in America regardless of race, creed or color. Any success I may have achieved may be traced to the guidance of my parents, the support given my efforts by my wife, and the willingness on my part to work hard, sacrifice, and never, never lose hope."

Q: I'd like to, before you go along, mention just for the record that you were just reading that from the 1980-1981 Who's Who in America and there's an extraordinary statement. And I don't think I've ever seen that kind of a statement in a Who's Who volume; it's just not done. Basically what you have in Who's Who are the biographical data, but nothing like this. And I was very much impressed when I read it.



MORROW: Well, it's just through sheer chance because I received a request from Who's Who a number of years ago saying that they were soliciting people in the Who's Who to give some kind of statement that might indicate why they had been successful, if one wanted to use that term. I didn't think much about it at that time. I thought about why and how much help I had received from others. So I really tried to put it down in a succinct fashion but never believed that I would see anything from it, and was not aware that this had been accepted until someone in the library at Rutgers University, where at that time I was working, asked me had I seen the latest Who's Who. And I told him I never had any reason to consult Who's Who on a regular basis.

And when I opened the volume, there was this statement. And I felt that that was a culmination of what my parents had contributed and my wife had contributed to any success that I might have had. Sincerely I had this feeling. And the fact that Who's Who accepted it from all of the people throughout America really had some kind of a significance.

Q: Definitely.

MORROW: I was at Rutgers; it's known that I'm going to be a math major; and the mathematics people greeted me warmly. However, at that time there was this system where the French Government would send the people of politics and professors to various universities in America to give talks either on literature or politics or whatever the case might be. They were always delivered in French. I belonged to Alliance Française and my curiosity was piqued, and, also, I felt from the beginning somewhat frustrated by not being able to follow completely these talks. And for some reason or another I got in my head that I'd like to learn how to speak a language like that fluently. And it reached a point where I had to make a decision about a major by the time of my sophomore year and I decided it would not be mathematics, but it would be French.

In retrospect, there might have been an element of absurdity of a black lad in 1928 deciding that he would major in something called French. It is true that this idea was challenged by a sociology professor at Rutgers University who asked me point-blank, "Why are you doing something like this? What can a black person ever do with a language like French? You should be taking something like social sciences, something that would be of some help to you later on." This might have given me a little misgiving, but I had expected my parents would be the ones to challenge this. They never did. Maybe it was the idea, well, if this is what he wants to do, it's his choice. I don't know whether they thought, if he's that stupid then let him learn the hard way. But, be that as it may, they never challenged, not once, this concept of learning a foreign language.



I can tell you now, without any hesitation, if I had not made that choice in 1928, then what happened to me in 1959, in being selected as the first American Ambassador to a French-speaking republic, Republic of Guinea, it would never have taken place. There is a very direct connection.

I'll just mention one other thing about my Rutgers career. I was successful in getting a Phi Beta Kappa key at the end of my junior year. I did participate in track and in wrestling, but there were two incidents that marred my career. The first was something now which seems to be quite insignificant. In my sophomore year I was participating with the wrestling team and the rule was, if you could put everybody down in your class, you would be the person who would be selected that particular week to wrestle in that particular weight class. At the time I was wrestling in the 145-pound class. I was in good shape because of having carried ice all summer, and also, after work, having trained down at the high school field, the playground. Actually I was successful in putting down the people against whom I was placed in this weight preceding the wrestling match for Franklin and Marshall. I went up to see the names of the times the bus would depart for Franklin and Marshall and my name was not on the list. And I felt it was an oversight and hurried to see the wrestling captain. He couldn't give an answer, the manager had no answer and then the coach. And, finally, I didn't discover until after the team had gone on the bus that the idea was abroad that the person at Franklin and Marshall would not want to wrestle a black person.

This was a humiliating something for a young person. It happened just prior to Thanksgiving and when I went home to Hackensack, I said I was never going back to college again. And my parents, instead of becoming excited, at first said nothing and then later on my father finally said, "Son, we did not send you to Rutgers to be a wrestler. Years from now if you had won a letter or a sweater, the moths could eat that up, but if you have something in your head, nobody, nobody can ever take that from you."

Well, after some thought I decided to go back to Rutgers. Now, in the senior year it's time to practice teaching in French, but New Brunswick High School would not accept me as a practice teacher. This created quite a problem, and I will say that the man-who was trying to make placements in the education department was very much embarrassed, and went around telling people: "Here we have a second Paul Robeson. You should be happy to have him in your school." That did not help whatsoever.

I first went down to Trenton because I'd heard that there was a school down there. I'd never been in such a school before, and it turned out to be a segregated school. I never knew what that was. We didn't have anything like that in North Jersey. They said they're sorry they couldn't take any practice teachers.



Then I came back and finally decided - I went to the language department head to find out what to do. Someone had spoken to a man by the name of Mr. Messic over at the vocational school in New Brunswick. He said he would be happy to have me over as a practice teacher. However, I had to go over there as a practice teacher in mathematics, not in French, and there were no blacks in the class yet - nobody challenged my presence there. Well, these two things gave me a sort of a soured feeling about dear old Rutgers, and at one point I said that I would never go back there again, but I actually did return; I believe it was in 1948.

Now out of Rutgers, where am I going to get a job? The depression's on, I'm back in Hackensack trying to think now what's going to happen, and in July I received a letter which made an offer of a job in some school in Trenton. I said, "Well, this is a junior high school; this is not a high school or a college." And they talked about subjects like mathematics and geography. I knew about mathematics and geography and they had nothing to do with language, and my parents said, "Why don't you go and talk to the people?" I went down there to talk, and, of course, as I had already indicated, I couldn't practice teach there. I discovered that it was a segregated school in a capital, state capital of New Jersey: New Lincoln School with a predominantly black population, as well as the teachers. It is true if you looked at some of the teachers there might have been some difficulty as far as identification was concerned, but they were all black.

I accepted the job there teaching mathematics and geography. I could have felt that this was a disillusioning experience when I discovered that some of the teachers there were not dedicated as the teachers I had had in Hackensack. And we were all black. The students were black and I thought that this would be an incentive to be sure that you could get these students interested in what they were doing in terms of the future and going on to Trenton High School, for I discovered that very few black students at that time even went on to Trenton High School. But then I realized some people here don't care if these youngsters go on or not. As a matter of fact, if they drop out it's okay.

Well, to make a long story short, I think that my stay in Trenton was a successful one. I became involved with the YMCA and we had a club, the James Weldon Johnson Club. James Weldon Johnson sent us a letter of dedication. He was the famous writer and poet at that time whose name was well known here as well as abroad, and in later years I discovered that many of those youngsters who were in the New Lincoln School, a number of whom I had taught, had gone on not only to high school but beyond high school. That was a real payoff.

I was in Trenton from 1931 to 1935 and went to a place called Bordentown, a manual training school, which was in an adjacent town. Bordentown was a manual training school but strangely enough it had an academic division. I was invited there to teach Latin and English - at least getting closer to a foreign language.



It was at this point that I married a young woman by the name of Ann Rowena Davis., who was a Hunter College graduate and at that time was working as a social worker with the YWCA. It was this young woman who started getting after me about graduate study. I told her I'd already done ten credits of graduate study but they were in education, and I didn't like it. She said, "Why are you doing something you don't like?" I said, "Well, I suppose it would be rather stupid at this point to be spending more money on French, but that's what I would really like to do." Her answer was, "If that's what you want to do, you should move in that direction immediately."

With that I enrolled in the graduate school at the University of Pennsylvania to work for a master's degree, going down on Tuesdays, on Saturdays and, before it was all over, one summer, at a financial sacrifice. My wife was always involved in that sacrificial effort.

Interesting thing about the University of Pennsylvania, I discovered then was that they were not accustomed to having blacks in the language department, not just taking French, just in the language department at all. And for some of the professors it was a new experience. And I didn't pay any attention to this and didn't become aware of it until the second year, when in the summer - it was the second or third year - when in the summer I wanted to take three subjects. No, it was the second year I wanted to take three subjects during the summer and received a query from the dean which sort of implied, we are not sure that you can do this.

When I got this notice in New Brunswick, I got in my car and went down to Philadelphia in a rage. I had to pay to go across the Benjamin Franklin Bridge. When I got there the dean was not in his office. I shall always feel that this was the hand of Providence. I asked the secretary, "Miss Carey, can you explain what this is to mean?" I said, "The only mark I have done here in Penn is the basic course in old French which all students are required to take. I received an "A" in that course. My Rutgers record, you have it; that's why I was entered into the Graduate School. You see what it was: the Phi Beta Kappa. And I won't talk about those things, but this is a matter on the record. What is the problem?" "Oh," she said. "I think what Dr. Green ... there's some kind of a mistake here ... because it raised a question about whether you would have the ability to do it." I said, "Why don't you let me try? How can they prejudice?"

Well, getting back to the subject: Took three subjects that year; got "A's" in all of them. Never any further question was every raised about "Could you do?" "Why don't you?" "I don't think you should," and so on.

I got the master's degree in 1942; moved South in 1945 to become chairman of the Foreign Language Department at Talladega College. Once again my wife's hand was in this because she let me know that, if I ever wanted to teach on the college level, since Rutgers didn't seem to be interested, Princeton was not interested, definitely, nor Harvard, I'd better start looking around somewhere where maybe I could actually make a contribution.



The letter came all out of a clear sky from Talladega inquiring whether I would be interested in a post there; and I threw it in the wastebasket, because I said I would be damned if I would ever go South. My wife retrieved this letter before we went up to Hackensack for the weekend, and she proceeded to lobby with my mother and sister and brother on her obstinate, quote, "stupid husband's" reaction about the South.

The result of that lobby is that I ended up in Talladega in 1945, and from then on it's a matter of history from 1945 to 1954; at Clark College in Atlanta from 1954 to 1956. I used to teach at Atlanta University in the summer, every summer from '50 to '56 and then went to North Carolina College in Durham '56 to '59. It was when I was in Durham that I got the call from the White House to go to Guinea.

In the process, however, it should be stated that I did take time out in 1947 to take a year's leave to study toward a Ph.D. at the University of Pennsylvania. I mention this because maybe again the hand of Providence; at that time I was thirty-seven years old and that's considered in most places too old to be trying to get a Ph.D. But who were the people who sponsored and signed and gave the recommendations that people in the graduate school at the University of Pennsylvania, who spoke about the record that this young man, young thirty-seven, young man had achieved and thereby helped me get a General Education Board fellowship which made it possible for a leave, with some sacrifice once again on the part of my wife to be able to take off a year? Now the fact that the General Education Board fellowship money came from the Rockefeller money at that point did not bother me, because I felt that it must be a worthy cause since it was for education, and, also, it was aiding a black who had little or no money to hopefully attain an objective. Things went well; the degree was received in 1952.

Well, how did I ever get to Rutgers? I wasn't good enough when I had the Ph.D.; the honor record didn't seem to matter; being a graduate influenced no one whatsoever, but I got called by President Eisenhower to go way across the world in another sphere, in another kind of work, had nothing to do with being a departmental chairman of a foreign language department, and suddenly I am discovered, or should I say, rediscovered by my alma mater.

The first time they offered me the job - this is not known - they offered me a job in 1961 and I had the satisfaction of turning it down because of the fact that President Kennedy had asked me to go from the U.N. to UNESCO in Paris to head the delegation there. And I felt, how could I give up a unique opportunity like that to go to a place that just suddenly had discovered I was alive after all these years? So, I went to France instead of going to Rutgers.



In 1963, when we returned to this country for a tour of duty in Washington at the Foreign Service Institute, Rutgers got on my trail and offered me an honorary degree. And I came up to take that, although I was very happy to actually have achieved with very hard work, with blood, sweat and blasphemy, the Ph.D. It was after this trip to Rutgers that they eventually got in touch with me in '64 and convinced me that I could probably do a job there instead of remaining at the Department of State.

On one footnote, when I turned in my resignation at the Department of State to Dean Rusk, on January 13, 1964, indicating that I would like to resign as of July 1, 1964, and ended up with the statement that "I shall leave Washington in July with a deep sense of respect and admiration for the Foreign Service and the Department of State. I shall be able to reiterate with sincerity the words expressed by our late revered President, I served the United States Government in that hour of our nation's need."

When I tendered this resignation to Dean Rusk, he would not accept it, and for three months I was interviewed by various members of the Department of State with the idea, why don't you stay with us? There are no political implications now, you've served under three presidents, your record speaks for itself, we need you here. And despite these people coming to see me constantly, I decided to throw in my lot with Rutgers.

Now my wife might have had a question about that because Penn State had made me an offer, financially much better than the Rutgers offer, and they had sent down one of the deans or directors of General Studies at Penn State, who spent two days in Washington, among other things, trying to convince me to come to Penn State. I didn't accept that offer. My wife might always have had some question in her mind, but she remained quiet about it because I guess she decided that this is just the reaction of the individual who maybe figured, ha, justice at last!. He didn't like some of the things that happened when he was back at Rutgers. Now here he gets a chance to go back there.

I can't think of anything else that might be important at this point.

Q: Well, I'd like to have you talk a good deal about that time at Rutgers. But before you go into it, once you left that spot with UNESCO in Paris, you also worked for a time at the School of Foreign Affairs, the Foreign Service Institute at the Department of State. Could you talk about that a little?



MORROW: Yes, it's strange, I think. Maybe going back to the Foreign Service Institute and being thrown into that particular post is really what made me decide to go back to academia because of the fact that what it amounted to, Foreign Service officers, at some point in their career, sometimes, if they are qualified, can get a year off or maybe a little more to go away for graduate study. There were Foreign Service officers at Princeton, Harvard, Yale, and other institutions in the United States. I was confronted with helping them get into these graduate schools and then going around to check on their progress. Made trips to Princeton; made trips to Harvard and to Yale. And here I was walking around on university campuses, checking up on people who were doing graduate work, hearing their problems and it did something to me.

Also, when I was asked to come back to Rutgers in 1963, to receive an honorary degree, and went around that campus, went up to the stadium where they had the graduation ceremonies, had to stand up and receive the hood and so on, and looked out at that expanse, saw all of those students who were graduating - something happened to one. And I suppose that even the people at Rutgers figured, maybe now is the time to make an offer, because this guy might have been softened by these various experiences. But it was really that going back to the Foreign Service Institute.

Now I will give you this footnote. I had finally gotten to Rutgers in July and, would you realize that a notice had come through from the State Department. They wanted me to come down for consultation, because President Johnson wanted me to go to Africa to explain the American political situation. Now I realize I shouldn't use the expression, that this was sort of a come-on game, for they figured if I would come back, then we could hook him and send him off somewhere to another post. I didn't accept the offer because on that basis, how would it look? Here I have just come to Rutgers and now I say, would you please give me two or three months' leave so I can go on a mission for the Department of State? I just can't do this in good conscience, so I turned down that offer. I have no regrets.

Once back at Rutgers something very interesting happened after I was there four years. They had what was called the University Senate and was always presided over by the president of the university; this time it was President Gross. I had been elected one of the senators from the college that I was representing, and the decision came to have a committee reorganize the Senate setup to try to make it more effective. And one of the things that came out of the reorganization was the fact that a faculty person should become the chairman of the Senate, and it should no longer automatically be the president of the university who should chair the Senate.



Now, the Senate was considered at Rutgers a rather august body, because, in most instances, it was made up of full professors or associate professors mainly, one or two. young assistant professors. The fact that you would be elected by your peers to either be a member of the Senate was considered an honor. With reorganization, where it took place in the fall of 1968 and went into effect in 1969, in an election of 1969, a nominating committee had to set up a slate, and I was called on by several members of this committee and asked, "Would you be willing to let us put your name up as the chairperson of the Senate?" I said, "I don't think I'm interested in that sort of ... I like to participate in the Senate with the concept that I don't like to be some kind of a straw." And I was told, "This is a serious offer."

Now the way slates were arranged at that time, there would be two people put up for each office and there could be nominations from the floor. The second person whose name had been put up to be chairman of the Senate was a chap who was very much respected in the physics department, a young physics professor who had made an excellent reputation for himself there at Rutgers. Something caused me to say, "Go ahead, put up my name." And the elections were held and the group committee that had to count the ballots went out and they came back in. They announced that I had been elected as the first chairperson of the Senate.

I must say that this was a great shock to me, because, despite the fact that there's a lot of talk about integration and so on, there were people at Rutgers who, by their attitude and actions prior to this point, had not shown themselves particularly affable or overwhelmed by the fact that at long last Rutgers was getting ready to allow blacks, if I can say "allow," to participate in their faculty. Because as I expressed to one person - getting off the subject of the point - "You know, I've been able to walk from one end of this campus to the other and I haven't even seen any black faces. What's going on here?" This is what I remarked in 1963 when I came up for the honorary degree. I said I could think that I saw a better average than this, why, even when I was an undergraduate, because at least there was one black in each class. And I didn't see any blacks in that graduating class of '63.

But to get back to the subject of the Senate ... this was the beginning of a very new era, most interesting, with problems and crises, one of the most interesting periods in my career. I was re-elected chairman of the Senate even though this was not in the constitution, because I had only served one-half of a term, that is, one semester, so therefore for '69 and '70 I served.

A sequel to that: In '72, I was elected by the Senate to be the faculty representative to the Board of Governors. This was considered, also, indeed an honor, because only after 1971 did it become legal for a faculty member to serve on the Board of Governors of the university because of the university laws. And between '72 and '76, when we would sometimes be in these meetings slugging it out, yes, slugging it out with the president and the vice president of academic affairs on the behalf of the faculties of the whole university, it sounds impossible and incredible. Yet it took place; it did happen. And when I look back on it now, it does still seem incredible.



Q: I'd like to ask you some questions about the kinds of problems you dealt with when you were on the Senate and also when you served as a faculty representative to the Board of Governors.

MORROW: I don't want to sound like a person who is bitter. I guess you could call me an old man now. With age is supposed to come wisdom and understanding and, definitely, compassion. But I must admit Rutgers didn't owe me anything. I got this degree and the honors. Many of my classmates were not quite as fortunate. However, after getting out and going on to graduate work and attaining what has been considered the necessary degrees, and publishing articles - not a book at that time - I still somehow or another did not qualify to become, for example, a member of the Rutgers faculty.

Remember I said they did not owe me anything. They did not owe me a job. However, when I finally did go back to Rutgers and took a look at the catalog, saw the faculty people and met some of the faculty members, I discovered, for example, one chap who was in the year before me. He graduated in 1930, and I graduated in 1931. He was a full professor teaching in the university. He didn't have a Ph.D.; he had published practically nothing. No books. How in the hell did he become a full professor? Did I think that was something?

Why, there was a chap who was there, as I thought, a professor. He must have been just an instructor when I was in my senior year, in the language department. When I returned to Rutgers years later, he was an honored, respected professor. He did not have a Ph.D.; he had never published (in a shout) anything!. Yet, he had been part of the system. There was another chap ... well, why am I talking like this? - whose father had been in the administration of the university, and he now had become a member of a faction of the administration. Never had a Ph.D. So I couldn't understand, well, what was the problem? If I had the so-called union card and the qualifications, plus the record that could back them up, why is it that Rutgers never considered that I was good enough to be a member of the faculty? Now they came after me, yes, but that was after I had supposedly done something in another sphere with the Department of State which had been acknowledged publicly.

Well, at least the door was opened, because I began to see a few more faces of color in the Rutgers arena. And at least I had the satisfaction of knowing that in the last part of the twentieth century, no matter what happened, there will be some black people in various positions in the State University.



The question mark which is in my mind, however, is how do you install in young people a feeling that will make them keep on keeping on despite what seem to be the obstacles that cannot be overcome, despite the fact that the thing or objective toward which they are striving sometimes seems impossible to attain? How can we install this in the black youth of our country? It has to be done. Now my parents were a help to me. Some youngsters don't have that kind of help. Could we find some way, something that could be passed on so that always we will know in the future that no matter what happens, our black youth will always try to attain, try to reach objectives even if they're told, stop wasting your time?

Q: Dr. Morrow, you've given us a very, very interesting picture of your background from a youngster in Hackensack right up to Rutgers and I think it helps. It will help future scholars better understand your work as Ambassador. I'd like to back up to your period of service in the diplomatic service and ask a couple of questions. If you had to go, if you had the offer to go back to Guinea today, how would you feel?

MORROW: In the first place, if I had an offer to go to Guinea or anywhere else, the first demand I would make would be that of selecting my embassy staff. I would not want somebody else to have the prerogative of deciding with whom I would have to work in the particular post, especially if it is known that this is going to be a difficult post. Now how do I go about choosing people? I can't exactly say that at this point, and yet I would have an idea of the kind of person with whom it would be possible to work successfully in a Guinean, let's say, climate and situation. A chap, for example, like young David Korn, who was in the Embassy in Paris in 1958 when I had to spend the summer in Paris because of the fact that I wasn't able to go on to Algeria and to Africa. Korn happened to be a chap with a Ph.D. from a respectable university. But he had a desire and a real intent to become knowledgeable about Africa and Africans. It was not a do-gooder concept, but a desire on the part of a person who realized, if I'm going to be successful in this area or in any other area, I must know the culture, the people, and find out everything that is possible about them and not have preconceived attitudes and ideas as many Americans might have.

Another thing. I would certainly try to discover, in some fashion, if the person involved, or the people involved, were troubled with stereotypes. Do they have a particular concept as to what a black should be doing? Can a black carry out a position of leadership and responsibility? It would be things of that nature that I would be interested in. As far as color was concerned, I don't care what the person's color might be. It would be advisable to have a mixed staff, not to have all either one color or the other color, if we're going to be representative of America.



Secondly, I would need an assurance from, let's say, the Department of State that the people in Washington were going to pay attention to the information which was sent back to Washington, to pay attention to the requests, to the suggestions; that they would become knowledgeable about the country by coming out as did Senator Symington and Governor Harriman and Senators Church and McGee, who took the trouble, back in the early days, to come out to the Guinean scene to discover firsthand about the complexities and the problems. In their instance, it was no longer necessary for them to conjecture about what a Guinean was or what the situation was. They had met Guineans and they had seen.

This is what I would ask in Washington. If they decided that this was asking too much and we can get somebody who won't be so much trouble to us and be insisting on this thing or that thing, then I would say to the offer, go to hell! I would not accept. It's as simple as that. Ahm. (Mrs. Morrow speaking).

Now, there is another side to this coin. I'd probably find it extremely difficult to go to Africa at this point, because there're some places in Africa ... because of being disillusioned by the folks who have been in positions of leadership. They have talked to the world about independence, freedom, democracy, the rights of the individual, the inherent right to life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness. All these high-sounding terms, when it has come down to the realities, seemingly, it has been a situation in which power has done something to the individual who is in the place of leadership. I'm not going to get specific in naming names, but all one has to do is to look over what has happened in Africa for the last ten years, five years, three years, if you please, two years, to see what kind of treatment the people have received from the people in places of leadership.

Take a look at the coups which have been effected in the various countries. Take a look at the individuals who have been behind these attempts, successful in many instances, to overthrow the government. Make an assessment to find out whether the folks who had taken over power are treating their fellow countrymen any better than the individual who has been put out of office, and you will discover that, in most instances, the people don't seem to be any better off.

So it raises a question as far as diplomacy is concerned. How are you going to deal with the realities which exist in many of the ... not just the African countries, but Latin American countries, for example, at this point in history? It's a real big question. It's a riddle, as a matter of fact. Now, I haven't even taken up the question of terrorism, which is a new factor, which apparently hangs over the head of all people, not just chiefs of mission, but anybody, a secretary, or whatever the situation might be in the Embassy, or even in industry. The new look, of course, is the question of terrorism. There's no point in my trying to go into that now. Nobody has found an answer to that at this time.



One thing I must say would not be fear that would be a deterrent, because if I had listened to the horror stories which I heard, for example, in 1959, when it was known that I was going to Africa, and when I was being warned, do not under any circumstances take my children and wife with me, if I had been motivated by fear, I would never have put foot on the African continent.

Q: Dr. Morrow, you talked a good deal about some of the unpleasant things, and I think it's pretty clear that the complot was one of the things that was most unpleasant about your stay in Guinea. What were your fondest memories? What are they?

MORROW: Fondest memories? For example, coming down out of the air in a plane, circling for the first time a strange airfield; descending and being met with music, with an army detachment standing at attention; having the privilege, for the first time in one's life, to review a group of black soldiers standing very erect, all correct, spit-and-polish, and realizing, here we are in Africa about to go on a new venture; riding in a car, all along the way people shouting words of welcome. I've already mentioned this, but when you say fond memories, it will always stick with me. And you can hear some of the things that were being said and you hoped that this greeting meant you should be successful in this effort here in this tour of duty. Riding up to a political convention in somewhat antiquated railroad cars along with members of the Guinea Government; riding along as an invited guest to the political convention; participating in the banter and exchanges on an equal level, and then of course, getting finally to Kankan and hearing the President give a five-hour speech during which, of course, one did not leave the arena (laughs) and (laughs some more)...

On being invited to go up to a place called Fria. This was a consortium that involved European companies and Olin Mathieson, an American company. The American company owned about, I think, 45% of the venture. However, the members of the Guinean Government decided to make an inspection tour of this Fria plant, and when I got to the Presidential residence that morning for the departure, we were assigned to various cars. I looked around and didn't see any other members of the diplomatic corps. I became very, very puzzled. How could this be a trip with the President and all the Ministers going to Fria with just me along? Where are all the other people? I decided that they would come later on in their own cars, but this was a mistake. I had found out that I was the only outside guest.

One of the highlights of this trip was not just visiting this huge consortium of Fria where bauxite or mined bauxite was changed into aluminum - this was one of the great resources of Guinea, besides the fact that there were some diamonds and other assets.



But getting back to this trip to Fria. As we moved around in the crowd, which, of course, was there and everywhere to greet and applaud every little incident, a little time later the President made it a point to relate in my presence what was going on. He indicated that he had been asked by a number of the young women in the area of Fria, who was this new young member of the Guinea Government? And when he asked which one do you mean, they had pointed to the American Ambassador. "And they decided," said President Toure, "that you are one of us. And they also decided that you were a Foulah." Well, now I admit that the Foulahs were very well educated people. But there was a little problem. A number of the Foulahs had resisted getting rid of their chiefs and also had resisted the ascension of President Toure. There would have been a time in Guinea when I would not have wished to have been mistaken for a Foulah. However, at this point it was a big joke.

On the other side of this is the fact that there was a chap named Achkar Marof, who was a Guinean representative to the United Nations. When he came back to Guinea some time later and went into the interior with his name and appearance, although he was somewhat shorter than I, he was mistaken for the American Ambassador. So President Toure used to say that we were the exchange: that I was the American who had become the Guinean and Marof was the Guinean who had become the American (laughs).

Among the memories would be, for example, some of the visits to the President's residence as, for example, on one occasion when we were downstairs waiting for President Toure to come down and there were present the Soviet Ambassador, Czechoslovakian, the United Arab Republic and from the Israeli Republic and others, and I made the statement, in French, that we are always standing around waiting like the people who open the doors: ushers, hoissiers. I'm sure this was later reported to the President by someone in the Soviet delegation. But at that point in time I was disgusted, impatient. Everybody agreed that that's exactly what we were. We were waiting around like the people who waited at the door for Toure and his group to make up their minds when they will get ready to go.

Another instance would be, for example, when we were getting ready to take a trip once again to the political convention in Kankan, and this time a bus was being provided by the Guinean Government. The problem is that this was the bus that had been constructed in Czechoslovakia, and it had no provisions for air conditioning. So therefore it was an extremely uncomfortable, stuffy situation. Here we are, the members of the diplomatic corps in this bus, waiting to go off, and the Soviet Ambassador Solod had yet to arrive. I saw him getting into his car, with a chauffeur, and called out to him and said, "Come on over here and join the rest of the proletarians." There was silence and then a roar, with the Guineans and the other members of the diplomatic corps all laughing and the Russian Ambassador shamefacedly walking over and getting in the car. It became obvious that he had not intended to ride in that hot stuffy - I mean Czechoslovakian bus - with the rest of the proletarians.



Some things at this point might escape me. For example, one occasion was the opportunity of going to visit the Ivory Coast. That's the only time, the little time off that my wife and I had during the whole period of time in Guinea, when the Chiefs of Mission, for example, in Africa met in Tangier. This was sponsored by the Department of State, so it was possible to get together to compare notes. And I can recall, for example, after being called upon to make remarks, everybody, of course, was interested in the Guinean situation. I came up with the expression that hell hath no fury like a Frenchman scorned. Now some of the Francophiles, I believe, from the Department of State did not particularly appreciate that appraisal. But I had made it because of the fact that the French apparently were getting back the report, back in Paris, that I was holding the French at arm's length. That's very easily explained. When we first went into Guinea, we were invited to a dinner by the French chargé d'affaires, Siraud. All the people in the Embassy staff felt that I should accept the invitation. I declined it. I wrote and explained to Siraud that I had not yet had a chance to meet with the Guinean Minister. I know that the Guineans already felt that we were taking instructions from him, the French.

Little did I know that actually this was an accusation that was going to be leveled by Ambassador Telli Diallo, who found out that we had stopped in Paris on the way to Guinea. But that had only been a matter of transportation, and I had not met any French, because a luncheon that was going to be planned by Ambassador Amory Houghton, which would involve some people from Quai d'Orsay, was cancelled under the feeling that I should have no meeting with any French before arriving in Guinea. This turned out to be in vain since the Guineans eventually decided, well, we were taking dictates from the French.

But the reason why I used the expression of the Frenchman's scorn is merely because of the fact that this was an erroneous report being sent back saying, "France is being held at arm's length." It paid off by having refused that invitation, because later on we had other invitations that could be exchanged. And at that point, the Guineans decided, well, I guess maybe the American is on the level and he is following his own route in this country and not somebody else's.

What else could I say? During the trip to America, when we would go to various cities and there would be receptions, there were these two other Guineans (even though most Muslims do not) who would drink alcohol. There were at least these two Ministers who would always be around near me when the cocktails were served; and I discovered that they would be taking cocktails along with me. Of course, President Toure finally named us the three musketeers (laughter), yet nobody raised any religious questions. But it just seemed a bit of a coincidence that every time I would have a drink, these two also seemed to have one (laughs) ... And I got after them and said: "That's a long ways away from orange juice or fruit juice." And they would merely laugh but continued to take their cocktails.

It's a few memories, you know, like that, which makes one feel well disposed toward a situation.



I remember, for example, the old man who carved from ivory the face that they call "The Old Man's Face." To see the workmanship of this individual was something to behold. And incidentally, although one is not supposed to accept any gifts, I got permission from the Department of State to accept the gift that was given to me by President Toure, which was one of these ivory casts of what was known as "The Old Man's Face."

Well, I think at this point, that just about covers it.

Q: Looking at your diplomatic service in total, what did you like most about the total experience? That's going beyond Guinea itself; the total picture. What did you like most about this experience?

MORROW: The thing I liked most about the experience was the feeling of being involved in something that was really vital and something that really counted, and being one of the people who might be making a little dent towards having better relations between my country, America, and other nations of the world. This is the thing that gave motivation; this is the thing that was the challenge; and this is what would keep one going on sometimes even though there was a great deal of frustration and things did not always seem to turn out the way one wanted. And if I had to do it all over again, I would like very much to have had the experience of serving in such a capacity for the Department of State.

Now one footnote: In the case of my son, and this I never said to him directly, or said, well, I never said to him directly, "I hope you don't go into the Department of State." I made that statement to my wife about the fact that, with his youth, with his intelligence and the fact that he would always be asking questions and so on, he would probably end up in some post in Siberia. But actually, I said to my son, "If you're thinking about going into the Department of State, my suggestion to you is, do like your old man; start at the top (laughs) and work your way down."

Yes, I think it's a wonderful thing to have had the opportunity to serve in the capacities in which I did serve.

Q: Now forgive me if I turn the coin and say, of that total diplomatic service, of the full thing, what other things did you like least about it?



MORROW: The things I liked least about it were the phoniness, hypocrisy, the lying, and back-stabbing, the selfishness, the desire for self-advancement, even if it's at the expense of one's so-called colleague; the lack of willingness to answer questions in a straightforward and forthright manner for fear it might somehow or another affect one's personal personnel report, and this might keep somebody from going up in the ranks. I think it's a pity if you have a service which gets to the point where people feel they cannot be honest; where people might even feel they must sometimes withhold important necessary information or withhold information that they ... the importance of which they are unaware, but would be very important somewhere else, as if piecing together pieces of a puzzle. It's too bad if a system will promote this kind of attitude, because it's very detrimental. And particularly if people are in crises posts, you have to have some kind of esprit de corps. You have to feel that you can trust the person with whom you must deal, and that when you are told or given information, they are trying to tell you as much as they actually know how.

I think that the concept of the elite element in the Department of State should be eliminated, if possible. The old school tie which makes it ... which means that only unless one comes from a certain educational institution or from a certain background should one become a Chief of Mission or a Chargé d'Affaires, or Ambassador, or, you name it. So on that side of the coin, these, I think, are some of the things that at this point strike me as being most unfavorable in the ambience of the Department of State experience.

Q:: If you were addressing a group of young people interested in entering the Foreign Service, what advice would you give?

MORROW: First of all, I would say, be sure that you are applying yourself to your studies in college right now. Whatever you are majoring in, try to do your very best, put your very best foot forward.

Secondly, I would say, and do not accuse me of having a vested interest, learn at least one foreign language, preferably two, maybe even three. Even if at this moment you cannot see any possible use that there might be for this, it will become invaluable for your advancement, if you want to talk in those terms, in the Foreign Service. In fact, it has become so valuable that at the Foreign Service Institute, at this point, there are many languages which are being taught, and this becomes part of the assessment on a person's personnel record.

In the third place, check yourself and see whether you are the kind of individual who can feel comfortable around people and also around people who may not be of the same country, nationality, or race. If you have any problems there, my advice to you, do not go into the Foreign Service. Do you have any problems, for example, about the concept of having to be far, far away from home without the possibility of, say, getting back too frequently? Do you have any qualms in that direction? You don't want to be in the Department of State.



And, finally, because of what's happening throughout the world today, consider seriously, will your temperament take being held as a hostage confronted with the possibility of dying? Thirty-five years ago nobody talked about that when they were thinking about the Department of State. Today, one has to be aware of it, and if you can take this in as all part and parcel of the situation, then it seems to me that you've got a good foot in on the way to the Department of State.

And, finally, how do you fare when you have to confront a group or panel who will be asking you questions and trying to find out from you why you think you could make a contribution to the Department of State?

Be aware that if you pass all the examinations, you have to go before a panel before you're finally taken in. Now, if you can take all the things in stride, you're in.

Q: Dr. Morrow, thank you so very much for sharing with us your recollections...

MORROW: Well, I must say, Miss Tutt - that's a very interesting name - that it has been a pleasure to me, a surprising pleasure to have been interviewed by a very charming, young woman who not only is an exponent of grace, but also of intelligence and poise. And you know, when you were asking about what I thought in terms of the Department of State, I couldn't help but think how things would have been different in Guinea, for example, or at the U.N., or in Paris, had it been possible to have a person of the stature of Miss Tutt present on the staff. Now this is not any blarney. As you know, I'm not Irish, and I'm trying to tell you this as a result of our few hours of experience together. Now, if you say, how could anybody possibly be making any such assessment, may I just call to your attention that all my life has been spent in dealing with people. And when I was asked how did you feel, what made you feel that you could be an ambassador, my answer was that all my life I had been dealing with people and have had to make judgments, sometimes at a very short notice, very important judgments. So I think that I have a right, at my age and with my wisdom, to make this assessment of the person who is interviewing me and saw to it that I even went ahead and said some things I hadn't even been thinking about saying (laughter). Amen!

Q: Thank you very much, Dr. Morrow.

End of interview